URBAN HOMESTEADING MARK T. ZIMMERMAN

THE NATION

NOVEMBER 13, 1976 60 cents

OUR 'COST-EFFECTIVE' DIPLOMACY

Vadillo, El Sol de Mexico

Paraguay: DOMESTIC TERROR, FOREIGN PROFIT

Penny Lernoux

Namibia: THE PRETENSE OF CONCERN

Patrick L. Smith

'He That Filches . . . My Good Name'

The Supreme Court on Defamation

LOUIS FISHER

Gene Lyons: Little Magazines & Small Presses

8-11
The Sherrod Library
Periodicals Dept.
E.Tennessee St. Univ
Johnson City, Tn. 37601
AG
7-76 7-77
NOV 8 1976

ETSU LIBRARY
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EDITORIALS

Time for Action

Like a slight majority of American voters, *The Nation* is relieved by the results of the Presidential election. It is reassuring that this country did not choose four more years of heartless immobility under Gerald Ford. It is comforting to know that the GOP advertising blitz, ending in that gaudy soap opera on election eve, could not tip the balance.

The question of "mandate" immediately arises. This vogue word has been much used by pundits as the polls showed Governor Carter's early lead slipping. The burden of it is that if Carter were to win by a slim margin, he had better take it easy and be cautious in what he tried to do. In fact, the only clear mandate on November 2 was for Gerald R. Ford to go home to Grand Rapids. Carter was elected to be President, in the normal constitutional way. His instructions from the American people are to act as President—above all, to act.

That implies that there is much to be done in this country, and there surely is a long agenda of measures that only government can take to make this system work. Perhaps these unmet needs of the people were finally what was on the minds of the majority of voters when they went to the polls. They had a choice between the fake "activism" of Ford, consisting of an aggressive stance abroad and vetoes for programs dealing with domestic problems, as against the commitment to change expressed both in the Democratic platform and by Carter.

However much Carter may have wavered on the key issues of justice and fairness in the early part of his campaign and under the influence of his calculating handlers, the fact is that he returned at the end to positions which may justly be called compassionate. That is, he was expressing a genuine concern for the problems of all the people of this country and not, as Ford shamelessly did, just its middle-class segment.

The President-elect, quite naturally, has much to prove to the people. The way he is now seen is distorted by a campaign in which the media played a most undistinguished role, as Harry Ashmore documented in *The Nation* of November 6. But Carter can now forget what he had to do, or felt he had to do, to get elected and turn his attention to how he can act as President.

He can, and should, face the real issues that confront him and all of us. He can draw up a short list of priorities that he will vigorously deal with in the early days of his Presidency. He will not, of course, be able to do everything at once, as Franklin Roosevelt discovered at an even more trying moment in our national life. But if he focuses on a few major questions, and can act in an approximation of harmony with a strongly Democratic Congress, he will find that he can rally great popular support behind his efforts.

We would suggest that, in domestic policy, he concentrate on eliminating many of the inequities which years of bowing to corporate interests have inflicted on the public. That means, among other things, persuading Congress that the grotesquely unfair tax structure must be radically changed. It means a comprehensive health-care system which eliminates the worst of the corruptly combined two worlds of private enterprise and bureaucracy. It means serious attention to the problems of the cities, wastelands where most Americans live. It includes developing and imposing, at last, a proper energy policy, one that preserves our surroundings and lessens our dependence on Arab princelings. The list is long, after years of neglect, but these are some of the priority items.

They require a vision which recognizes that the United States is profoundly threatened, as a system and as a civilization, by crises of conscience, confidence and structure. Carter has suggested, here and there in his speeches, that he is aware of these challenges. One is entitled to hope that he will be thinking mainly about these great questions between now and January 20.

On the role of this country in the world, under a Carter administration, we have to rely more on hope than faith. To be sure, his Republican opponents, before and after Ford beat off the Reagan challenge, have flaunted the worst kind of "Number One" chauvinism, thus skewing any serious dialogue about defense and foreign policies in the world as it really is. Carter has therefore been on the defensive about his and his party's modest proposal for a $5 billion to $7 billion cut in the defense budget. And he has hardly had a chance to express himself on the matter of the runaway "intelligence" apparatus of this country, supposedly under some kind of control after all the post-Watergate investigations, but actually still a "rogue."

It would be deeply disappointing if Carter did not quickly show his concern about the system of "friendly" dictatorships around the world upon which his predecessors have built a structure which they say is essential for our "national security." This structure can be looked at morally or practically, and the verdict is the same—it must go because it outrages every decent sense and also because it does not work.

And so we can join what we believe to be the majority of Americans in saying that the election spared us the worst and gave hope for the best. The realization of that hope depends on Carter and the Congress he will have to work with. The omens will start appearing very soon, and, like most Americans, we shall be watching with a kind of optimistic apprehension.

The Multinational CIA

In the late 1960s, some of the less rational anti-war demonstrators were fond of chanting the slogan, "Bring the war home!" *That* war has mercifully ended, but recent events make it clear that the war has come home nevertheless—and it was not the young radicals who brought it here. Ironically, but logically, the war now being fought on our shores has been inflicted on us by the same people who sent it abroad. It is a muffled war, an underground war, a war of secret agents.

During the last fifteen years, as the struggle for control of the Third World has grown fiercer, the United States has steadily increased its exports of a dangerous political commodity: repression. In country after country, right-wing regimes have taken power with our aid and encouragement, and have attempted the elimination

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of dissent on a scale hitherto unknown. Their secret police have learned the science of terror from American experts, and our catalogue of goods for sale now prominently features the equipment necessary for counterinsurgency, riot control, political espionage and torture. In short, we have created a dozen Frankenstein monsters—and as such creatures have a way of doing, they have now returned to haunt our own streets.

Recent weeks have produced a flood of reports detailing the operations of foreign agents in the United States. The most striking concern the minions of our close ally, the South Korean dictator Park Chung Hee. First we heard of disturbing indications that linked the reactionary religious leader, Sun Myung Moon, to the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Then came the news of a major inquiry now being conducted into the alleged attempts of the wealthy Korean businessman, Park Tong Sun, to influence members of Congress and other politicians. And *The New York Times* has published detailed reports on how agents of the KCIA systematically harass Korean communities in the United States. Opponents of Park Chung Hee in Los Angeles have been beaten, boycotted, even kidnapped by Park's ubiquitous thugs.

No less revolting was the bland admission by the Shah of Iran, in an interview broadcast on CBS's *60 Minutes*, that agents of the dread Iranian SAVAK operate (with American approval, claims the Shah) to "check up on" his political enemies in the United States. Iranian students here have long suffered from the SAVAK's terrorist activities, and in August Dr. Reza Baraheni, the celebrated poet and scholar whose life has been threatened since he began publicizing conditions in Iran, demanded an investigation of a report (originating within the State Department) that a SAVAK hit squad had arrived in New York with the intent of eliminating Iranian dissidents. On October 28 Secretary Kissinger belatedly agreed to look into the matter.

Assassination of resident foreigners became more than a possibility with the death by bombing of the distinguished refugee from Chile, Orlando Letelier. As we have stated before, there is excellent reason to suppose that agents of DINA—Chile's equivalent of KCIA and SAVAK—were involved in Letelier's murder, and that their purpose was both to silence a powerful democratic voice and to sow fear among those who will carry on Letelier's work.

How many other foreign gangs with sinister acronyms are currently slinking about in this country? And how long before their implements of terror, largely concentrated so far upon their own nationals, will be turned also on Americans? What we already know makes one point clear: that police repression increasingly respects no boundary. The KCIA, SAVAK, DINA and the rest are indistinguishable from the CIA that trains, equips and nurtures them, and whose "principles" they share.

What we are witnessing is the development of an *international* Central Intelligence Agency, headquartered in Washington. Its foreign affiliates may be under the control of the dictatorships to which they report, but the whole apparatus, including the American CIA, is not effectively checked by the elected government of this

IN THIS ISSUE

November 13, 1976

EDITORIALS

482

ARTICLES

485 "He That Filches . . . My Good Name": The Supreme Court on Defamation — *Louis Fisher*

Our "Cost-Effective" Diplomacy

487 Paraguay: Terror and Profit — *Penny Lernoux*

492 Our Latin American Poll Watchers — *Penny Lernoux*

493 Namibia: The Pretense of Concern — *Patrick L. Smith*

498 Urban Homesteading: Maybe the Best Deal in Town — *Mark T. Zimmerman*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

501 Publishing the Backwoods Genius — *Gene Lyons*

502 For the Man Who Discovered the New Market Caverns (poem) — *Paula Rankin*

503 Mewshaw: Earthly Bread — *Eugene Chesnick*

505 Pinsky: Sadness and Happiness
Corn: All Roads at Once — *J.D. McClatchy*

506 Music — *David Hamilton*

508 Films — *Robert Hatch*

508 Near the Mountains (poem) — *Joseph Bruchac*

509 Theatre — *Harold Clurman*

Publisher
JAMES J. STORROW Jr.

Editor
BLAIR CLARK

Associate Publisher
LINDA EDER STORROW

Executive Editor
ROBERT HATCH

Literary Editor
ELIZABETH POCHODA

Contributing Editor
EMILE CAPOUYA

Copy Editor, MARION HESS; Poetry Editor, GRACE SCHULMAN; Theatre, HAROLD CLURMAN; Art, LAWRENCE ALLOWAY; Music, DAVID HAMILTON; Dance, NANCY GOLDNER; Architecture, JANE HOLTZ KAY.

Washington, ROBERT SHERRILL; U.N., ANNE TUCKERMAN; Latin America, PENNY LERNOUX; London, RAYMOND WILLIAMS; Paris, CLAUDE BOURDET; Bonn, C. AMERY; Jerusalem, HERBERT KROSNEY; Canberra, C. P. FITZGERALD.

Former Editors: EDWIN LAWRENCE GODKIN; OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD; FREDA KIRCHWEY; CAREY McWILLIAMS.

The Nation is published weekly (except for first week in January, and bi-weekly in July and August) by the Nation Company and copyright 1976 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10014. Tel: CH 2-8400. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Price: One year, $21.00; two years, $37.00. Add $1 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $2 other foreign.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give four weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give Zip Code numbers for both addresses.

Manuscripts. All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Book Review Index and the Public Affairs Information Service.

THE NATION

Volume 223
No. 16

The Sherrod Library

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country. And that that is so even in the national capital, the murders of Orlando Letelier and his American assistant Ronni Moffitt make painfully clear.

The Clerical Vanguard

It begins to look as if the United States may soon face a choice in Latin America between the people and the Catholic Church on one side, and the military regimes that govern two-thirds of the people of that continent on the other. Our correspondent, Penny Lernoux, in another report in her remarkable series on the tortured (and torturing) politics south of the border, raises that possibility in her dispatch from Paraguay (see p. 487).

It is not news that the twenty-two-year dictatorship of General Stroessner is one of the worst down there and, in fact, one of the most brutal and backward in all the world. But there are new and deeply disturbing features to the political system of that small country. One of them is that Paraguay seems to be abandoning its traditional role as a buffer between Brazil and Argentina, and becoming a satellite of Brazil. It may be recalled that Richard Nixon once said that all of Latin America would go the way Brazil went; he said that as his government went ahead with the business of establishing close relations with the military regime there. After all, Brazil was rapidly industrializing itself under that particular dictatorship and never mind the great suffering that this "modernization" was costing the Brazilian people.

In neighboring underdeveloped Paraguay, this year has seen a series of moves to sell off the country's assets to foreign bidders, and by no means to the highest bidder. From Penny Lernoux's account, it looks as though the Stroessner regime were disposing of that country's natural wealth to the highest briber, and for ridiculously low bribes at that. Brazil will be the beneficiary of the hydroelectric bonanza, and Brazilian interests control about one-third of the Paraguayan land. A company from Denver, Colo. has won, for a song, the right to exploit the mineral wealth of the entire eastern half of the country.

And so the exploitation of Paraguay's people goes on, with American interests joining in. The Church there has been the focus of opposition to a brutal system that comes close to genocide for the Indian population. The bishops and priests have boldly stood up to the Stroessner regime and they have suffered the persecution such governments routinely impose on their subjects. Like the people they minister to, the members of the religious communities have been imprisoned, beaten and tortured for protesting such conditions as the ownership of 87 per cent of the land by 1.1 per cent of the ranches.

The United States has been virtually silent in the face of all this, no doubt in the interest of good relations with a "friend." The dictator Stroessner boasts that our Ambassador to Asunción is an unofficial member of his Cabinet. Time was when the Church was an ally of such rulers, but that is long gone. The Catholic Church in much of Latin America is now in the forefront of resistance to these repressive governments.

Now it is the United States that has taken the place of the once reactionary clerical establishment as the prop to the military dictatorships. All this is in the name of profitable, enterprising anti-communism, of course, but the day may be coming when the government of the United States is in open and direct conflict with the Catholic Church in most of Latin America.

A World Without Kissinger

The problem of what to do with Henry A. Kissinger will soon be his alone. The rest of us will, of course, have to face the prospect of his memoirs, a long-running serial of adventure and romance, not to mention "concepts," for which publishers are already said to be bidding sums exceeding $1 million.

These observations arise from two recent articles in *The New York Times* dealing once again with the Kissinger phenomenon. One was a proposal by that paper's foreign affairs columnist, C.L. Sulzberger, that he be made president of Harvard University. This would mean the ousting of the present president, Mr. Derek Bok, but, for the Sulzbergers of the world, that would be a minor sacrifice on the part of Bok and Harvard to realize the much greater good of an appropriate forum for the ex-Secretary of State.

What such an epiphany would mean for the integrity of the intellectual process at that old university is a matter for the students, faculty and alumni of Harvard to worry about; the rest of us can let it pass with the comment that the devious ways of diplomacy, in Kissinger's style at least, make an odd preparation for presiding over an institution of learning.

The second trigger for some observations on "The Kissinger Legacy" is pulled by an article with that title in the *Times Magazine* of Sunday, October 31, by a diplomatic correspondent of that newspaper, Leslie H. Gelb. It starts by stating that Kissinger "will go down in history as a great statesman," a flat assertion qualified only by the statement that this judgment will not be for reasons the Secretary of State "would relish" or "without some black marks." This curious essay then goes on, in detail, to demolish most of the reasons why history would tend to reach such a judgment.

Gelb characterizes "détente," the most trumpeted of Kissinger's accomplishments, as "flawed both in conception and implementation," whether viewed as a "grand design or a strategy." He describes it as oversold and underdeveloped, resting more on trade relations financed by the dollar than on anything conceptually larger.

When he gets to the other actions and policies with which Kissinger is identified—the dragging out of the war in Vietnam, the shuttling that produced the Middle East troop separation agreement (and had the effect of making the United States and not the USSR the dominant influence in that area)—Gelb is not very flattering about the record. Like most journalists who have been exposed to the Secretary of State's aura, he has been affected by that "superstar" quality, but he plods along with his rather scathing account of the actual results of Kissinger's views and actions. One is left with the impression that the record is largely razzle-dazzle, very light on substance and long on self-promotion, which has worked

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

well enough to make this man a popular figure in our public life. The mystery of why, after all that, history will see Kissinger as a "great statesman" remains intact.

His popularity, as measured by the opinion polls, is still certifiably there; otherwise the Ford campaign would not have had Kissinger submissively declare that he might indeed be willing to stay on. Our own belief is that the works of Kissinger will begin to unravel quite soon, along with his reputation as a miracle worker, the master weaver of the tactical shuttle. We do not think that, as a consequence, a foreign policy dominated by moral considerations will rapidly succeed his kind of calculating "pragmatism," to use one of Richard Nixon's favorite terms. In fact, Kissinger's brand of star-dusted diplomatic manipulation will remain to haunt his successors.

Kissinger's real legacy may turn out to be a worldwide system of repression of all kinds of freedom, made in the U.S.A. and erected in the name of resistance to Communist totalitarianism, but dreadfully resembling the thing it was supposed to combat.

Nuts to Soup

In recent days, the Nestlé company has been stuffing mailboxes with sample packages of a food substitute called Souptime. In using this product, housewives with access to a small but well-equipped testing laboratory will have a distinct advantage over those whose culinary experiments are limited by the facilities of an average kitchen. Consider . . .

In addition to such familiar ingredients as corn starch, vegetable oil, chicken meat and fat (Souptime comes in various flavors; the one being offered as a sample is "Cream of Chicken Flavor"), soy flour and onions, the packet contains, in amounts unspecified, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate, mono- and diglycerides (stabilizers), silicon dioxide (flow conditioner), sodium silicoaluminate (also a flow conditioner), tricalcium phosphate, thiamine hydrochloride, disodium inosinate and disodium guanylate (both flavor enhancers). The list goes on, but that will do for a beginner's course in chemistry.

The Nation, like most cooks, has no laboratory, so we are unable to say what side effects, if any, may lurk in this admirably stable, suavely flowing, brilliantly flavorsome brew. For all we know, it is utterly harmless, but still the question is why? A woman about to take her family off for holiday on one of the nearer planets might be disposed to stuff a few Souptime packs in her rucksack, but down here on earth there are markets, both super and family, so what's to prevent anyone from grabbing a few leeks, a couple of potatoes, some chicken wings, a little parsley, some salt (flavor enhancer) and cooking up a soup that does not need to be stabilized, made to flow, or artificially colored (last item in the list quoted from above)?

The answer, Nestlé would say, is simple: Souptime can be made ready to slurp in just ten seconds—that is, after the water is brought to a boil. It is the fastest thing ever seen in the kitchen—a very Concorde of a dish. Set Nestlé to the task, and they could get a Thanksgiving dinner to the table in a minute and a half. That's progress.

'HE THAT FILCHES . . . MY GOOD NAME'

The Supreme Court on Defamation

LOUIS FISHER

This year the Supreme Court decided a case that weighed a man's good name against the actions of Kentucky law-enforcement officials, much to the advantage of the latter. The case (*Paul* v. *Davis*) offers revealing insights into how the Burger Court views individual rights and governmental power.

The legal dispute arose in 1972 when Edgar Paul and Russell McDaniel, chiefs of police in the city of Louisville and in Jefferson County, Kentucky, authorized the preparation and distribution of a flyer containing the names and mug shots of persons described as "subjects known to be active in this criminal field" of shoplifting. About 800 flyers were distributed to merchants and businessmen in downtown Louisville. Edward Charles Davis III, a newspaper photographer, had been arrested—but not *convicted*—of shoplifting. The charges against him were eventually dropped. Nevertheless, his name and photograph appeared on page 2 of the flyer. At the top of each page was the heading, "Active Shoplifters." His employer, after advising Davis that "he had best not find himself in a similar situation" in the future, decided that it would be inadvisable to send Davis on any assignments to retail stores.

Davis initiated a suit, claiming injury to reputation and impairment of earning capability. His suit was dismissed by the district court. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, in reversing the lower-court decision, rejected the idea that police chiefs can determine the guilt or innocence of an accused: "Such a determination can be made only in court of law." By branding Davis an active shoplifter, accusing him of a continuing course of criminal conduct, grouping him with convicted shoplifters and distributing his name and photograph to Louisville merchants, the two officers had made "a direct and devastating attack on the good name, reputation, honor and integrity of the person involved."

The circuit court relied heavily on the Supreme Court's decision in *Wisconsin* v. *Constantineau* (1971), which

Louis Fisher, author of President and Congress *(The Free Press) and more recently,* Presidential Spending Power *(Princeton University Press), won the Louis Brownlow Book Award given by the National Academy of Public Administration. He is completing a book on Presidential-Congressional confrontations.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

held that an individual could not be stigmatized by police officials without notice and an opportunity to be heard. A Wisconsin police chief, without observing those procedural safeguards, had posted a notice in all retail outlets in Hartford to prohibit for one year the sale of liquor to Ms. Constantineau. The Supreme Court held that where a "person's good name, reputation, honor, or integrity is at stake because of what the government is doing to him, notice and an opportunity to be heard are essential." Posting by the police might be regarded by members of the community as a notice of illness, or as a stigma, but in either case it degraded the person. To insure that individuals do not become the victims of an official's caprice or carelessness, the Court said, it was essential that certain proceedings be followed. Chief Justice Burger dissented, as did Justices Black and Blackmun.

On March 23, the Supreme Court reversed the circuit court's decision in *Paul* v. *Davis*. Justice Rehnquist, writing for a 5-to-3 majority, rejected the view that the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause should extend to Davis the right to be free of injury whenever the state may be characterized as a wrongdoer. He denied that the words "liberty" and "property," as used in the Fourteenth Amendment, could be used to single out reputation for special protection over and above other interests to be protected by state law. He believed also that the circuit court had analyzed *Constantineau* improperly. The two cases appear to be parallel, in the sense that police officials in each situation had committed an act of defamation. But Rehnquist distinguished the two by noting that in Wisconsin an individual was deprived of a right previously held under state law (the right to purchase liquor), while Davis could claim only the more general deprivation of liberty and property.

Read it as you will, the effect of the Rehnquist opinion is to condone the action of the Kentucky police chiefs who took it upon themselves publicly to label someone—who had never been convicted of a crime—as an active shoplifter. There was no presumption of innocence, no opportunity for notice and hearing, no procedure to find a defendant guilty beyond all reasonable doubt. Rudimentary procedural safeguards were ignored in the cause of crime prevention. A police chief I know in the Washington, D.C. area, after expressing dismay at the Rehnquist holding, told me that the "majority of chiefs in larger departments in the United States would not want to publicize information on potential offenders who have not been convicted."

In the final paragraphs of his decision, Rehnquist characterizes the Davis suit as "a claim that the State may not publicize a record of an official act such as an arrest." That is disingenuous, for Davis complained of far more than that. The police chiefs did not publicize an arrest; they determined guilt, a responsibility formerly reserved to the courts. Elsewhere in his opinion Rehnquist talks of "mere defamation." What hierarchy of values compels him to qualify, or demote, individual reputation, which has long enjoyed the protection of society and the courts? Would he, in a separate opinion, speak of "mere arson"? Would he be unmoved if the police, on the basis of a mistaken arrest, distributed his photograph as that of an active thief?

Members of the Supreme Court need not worry about such miscarriages of justice; prominent and influential individuals are not subjected to such treatment. The police have the good sense to expunge erroneous information that is embarrassing to the well-placed. But those of humbler status, Davis and most of the rest of us, are vulnerable to the whims of law-enforcement officials. The Rehnquist opinion is therefore doubly disturbing because it carries within it this potential for class discrimination.

Rehnquist's treatment of defamation demonstrates that in his "balancing test" toward law enforcement, he gives little weight to individual liberties and procedural safeguards. In reaching out for support, he reproduces passages that actually undercut his argument. He quotes Justice Douglas, from *Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee* v. *McGrath* (1951), as saying: "This is not an instance of name calling by public officials." But that was precisely the circumstance for Edward Charles Davis III. From Justice Jackson, in that same case, he draws this observation:

> I agree that mere designation as subversive deprives the organizations themselves of no legal right or immunity. By it they are not dissolved, subjected to any legal prosecution, punished, penalized, or prohibited from carrying on any of their activities. Their claim of inquiry is that they cannot attract audiences, enlist members, or obtain contributions as readily as before. These, however, are sanctions applied by public disapproval, not by law.

Not so with Davis, who was punished and penalized, could not carry out his normal activities, and all of it sanctioned directly by officials of the law.

Justice Brennan, dissenting in *Paul* v. *Davis*, noted the casual attitude of Kentucky police toward due process. During cross-examination, Davis's attorney asked how the police could conclude that someone merely arrested for shoplifting was in fact an "active shoplifter." Police Chief Paul replied: "The very fact that he's been arrested for the charge of shoplifting and evidence presented to that effect." The attorney probed further: "And this is not based on any finding of the court?" Came the answer: "No, sir." That sets the cause of procedural due process back quite a few centuries.

Police standards were also prominently displayed in a brief prepared by Americans for Effective Law Enforcement, Inc. and the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police, two groups that had urged the Supreme Court to review the circuit court decision. The brief argued that the circuit court's opinion, if sustained, "could seriously hamper crime prevention efforts of law-enforcement agencies and, as a consequence, is of extreme importance to law enforcement nationwide." The distribution of the flyer was described as a "totally legitimate purpose . . . limited to merchants and their security people in an attempt to enable them to watch for known shoplifters." Once you distribute 800 copies of a flyer, the circulation cannot be "limited." Control is surrendered. The brief further asserted that members of the community had a need to know if "criminally inclined individuals are encroaching upon their sphere of activity." No matter, ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

parently, that Davis had never been convicted. Since Davis had been arrested, the police were justified in identifying him as "criminally inclined."

Paul v. *Davis* does not present the kind of defamation issue that has confounded the Supreme Court in previous decisions. There was no need to reconcile the law of defamation with the freedoms protected by the First Amendment. Often in the past the Court, when petitioned by individuals whose reputations have been damaged, has declined to grant relief on the ground that free speech and a free press need breathing space to survive. Those cases generally involved defamatory statements issued by *private* parties—either in newspapers, magazines, or on the air. Some abuse of First Amendment freedoms has been tolerated in order to insure the free and open discussion on which our form of government depends. But the flyers disseminated by the Kentucky police officials had nothing to do with First Amendment freedoms or democratic debate.

Nor was there any need in the Kentucky shoplifting case to apply the Court's previous criteria for defamation. The Court has lent its protection to libel that is directed at "public officials" and "public figures," provided that the statements are not made with "actual malice" (with knowledge that the statement is false, or with reckless disregard of whether it is false). Calculated falsehoods about public officials do not enjoy constitutional protection. In *Paul,* by contrast, the libelous utterance was made by a public official against a private party, and as recently as the *Gertz* case, in 1974, the Court has held that private individuals have a more compelling call on the courts than do public figures for redress of injury inflicted by defamatory falsehood. And while truth has long been regarded as a defense in a defamation action, the police chief's description of Davis as an "active shoplifter" was patently false.

Paul v. *Davis* signals a substantial retreat from the protection that Western civilization has given to reputation. Shakespeare helped transmit that value in *Othello* through these words of Iago: "Good name in man and woman, dear my lord, Is the immediate jewel of their souls; Who steals my purse steals trash; 'tis something, nothing; 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands; But he that filches from me my good name; Robs me of that which not enriches him; And makes me poor indeed."

The Supreme Court has in the past recognized that a man's name "is his own property, and he has the same right to its use and enjoyment as he has to that of any other species of property." In 1966, in the *Rosenblatt* case, Justice Stewart reminded us that the individual's right to the protection of his own good name "reflects no more than our basic concept of the essential dignity and worth of every human being—a concept at the root of any decent system of ordered liberty." That principle is threatened when law-enforcement officials can call someone a criminal who has been arrested for, but not found guilty of, an offense. The behavior of Kentucky police officials brings to mind the warning of Justice Brandeis in 1928, in one of his most famous dissents: "Experience should teach us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purposes are beneficent. Men born to freedom are naturally alert to repel invasion of their liberty by evil-minded rulers. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachment by men of zeal, well-meaning, but without understanding." □

OUR 'COST-EFFECTIVE' DIPLOMACY

Paraguay: Terror and Profit

PENNY LERNOUX

Asunción

"Then they beat me and afterwards . . . oh, I can't remember, I can't remember," sobbed the woman, clutching her head as she rocked back and forth.

"Please don't cry—please," I entreated, feeling close to tears myself. "I'm sorry, so terribly sorry. This is horrible."

And it is.

Although tales of torture are now a dime a dozen in Latin America, it is impossible to listen to such stories without a personal sense of revulsion and pain. Unlike the victims of natural disaster or disease, these people have been mutilated by other human beings in sadistic rites that surpass the worst horrors of the medieval torture chamber. To complete the nightmare, most are bystanders, arrested and tortured simply because of their association, through friendship or family, with critics of Latin America's military regimes. In Chile and Uruguay it is enough to have been a member of a labor union or Christian youth organization to be imprisoned.

So widespread is repression in the southern half of the continent that almost everyone has a horror story to tell, either of a personal experience or people they know. Some, like the sobbing woman in Asunción, try to block out all memory of the experience. Arrested during a recent political roundup in Paraguay because of her work with Catholic peasant organizations, she was so badly tortured with electrical shock, particularly on the ears, that she was driven insane. With four other political prisoners, she was dumped into the Asunción insane asylum where conditions are worse than in an 18th-century Bedlam. The police explained that the five had been picked up on the streets because they were obviously "crazy vagrants."

The woman's relatives, tipped off by an anonymous caller, eventually located her in the asylum. Though she is gradually recovering from the nightmare, she still suffers lapses into insanity. One of approximately 1,100 Para-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

guayans arrested during the first half of this year, the woman was never formerly charged with any crime. Not that a court trial would have made any difference; the judicial system is totally subservient to Gen. Alfredo Stroessner's twenty-two-year-old dictatorship.

The oldest military regime in Latin America and, with Haiti, the most corrupt, Stroessner's administration is a crude example of the military governments now ruling two-thirds of the Latin American populace. The government continues to use the shopworn excuse of "Communist subversion" for periodic roundups of peasants, workers, students and priests, but ideology has nothing to do with what is happening in this small, backward and terrorized country. Stroessner's government is not a modern Fascist state any more than the peasants are Communist guerrillas. Ideology is simply an excuse for thuggery in a medieval, social and economic setting. The motives for torture and assassination are simply money and power.

This year's reign of terror in Paraguay was purely preventive repression. Stroessner was under no threat; critics unanimously agree that so long as he has the backing of the United States and Brazil, only natural death will remove him from power. A hardy 63, the burly, red-haired general is pushing through a constitutional amendment to enable him to continue as President until 1983, when his son Gustavo, an army pilot, will succeed him in a South American variation of the Duvalier dynasty in Haiti.

With the political scenario prearranged for at least another decade, Stroessner's only concern is to maintain a rigid class system whereby the privileged 4 per cent of the population can maintain itself in feudal splendor. Although there exist no peasant or workers' organizations capable of opposing the government, periodic roundups in selected communities keep the masses in a perpetual state of fear. In the department of Misiones in southeastern Paraguay, where four villages were invaded by the army and the police in April, I found it impossible to talk to the peasants about anything more incriminating than the weather. Anyone might be a *"piragué,"* one of Stroessner's paid spies, so it is wiser to play dumb. As in feudal Europe, survival in Paraguay is possible only with a protector, or "patron." For the peasants this means the landlord; for the worker it is the boss. Stroessner is the chief "patron" of the small middle and upper classes whose adulation of *"el jefe"* is such that they have publicly stated, "we have our Christ and need no other."

In return for this fealty, Stroessner has distributed a variety of rich sinecures in the narcotics, contraband and prostitution trades, and has passed along hefty payoffs from the foreign companies that control 84 per cent of the economy. While the privileged minority in Paraguay enjoys private jets and chauffeur-driven Mercedes, life for the majority has changed little since colonial days. Indeed, Stroessner still runs the country as if it were a cattle hacienda.

A small, agrarian nation, Paraguay is woefully underdeveloped precisely because of hacienda economics. Given the systematic repression, the elite are under no pressure to modernize farming or business methods. Were the peasants organized, it would be impossible for the country's cattle barons to maintain large tracts of poorly farmed land and still reap huge profits. But since daily wages average less than 50¢, it hardly matters that only 1 per cent of the country's 102 million acres of arable land are efficiently cultivated.

So skewed is land distribution in Paraguay that 87 per cent of the farm acreage is occupied by 1.1 per cent of the ranches. The rest of the rural population crowd into minute parcels known as "minifundia" or work as peons on the ranches, where according to Msgr. Anibal Maricevich, the Catholic bishop of Concepción, "they have less value than a house or a cow." Annual per capita income of these peasant families is a bare $85, and they make up 60 per cent of Paraguay's 2.5 million population. Nine-tenths of the children never finish primary school. Even the simplest medical services are nonexistent and nutritional deficiencies cause 86 per cent of the deaths.

Unable to endure such conditions, thousands have fled the country. One out of three Paraguayans has migrated to neighboring countries; 800,000 are in Buenos Aires alone. Most of those who stay behind accept their lot with fatalistic submission. *"Mboriahu clamor ha campana yvyra avave nohendui"* is an expression of the Guaraní Indian peasants. It means: "No one listens to the cry of the poor or the sound of a wooden bell."

Underlying the peasants' poverty is another, equally sinister form of repression—cultural alienation. Paraguay is often held up as an example of racial fusion between Spaniards and the Guaraní Indians, but with 48 per cent of the population speaking both languages, anthropologists point out that this bilingual attribute is really a device for maintaining two unequal cultures.

Spanish is the language of the government, the schools, the news media, of technology and money. Guaraní is the language of the kitchen, the rural poor and the slums. As Jesuit anthropologist Bartomeu Melia notes, native Guaraní speakers may be able to converse in simple Spanish, but that does not mean that they understand even moderately complex statements made in the language. Actually, most Guaraní speakers are lucky to complete three years of primary school. One-quarter of the children must repeat the first grade because Guaraní is the only language spoken at home and Spanish the only language taught at school. Two cultures have therefore emerged—the Spanish culture of wealth and the Guaraní culture of poverty.

The Indians, Paraguay's untouchables, are at the very bottom of Paraguay's caste system; they have no land and no rights and are the victims of an ongoing genocide as ugly as the Indian massacres by the early Spanish settlers. Though slavery was supposedly abolished in the 19th century, Indian slaves are common in Paraguay. Indeed, there is an infamous slave market at San Juan Nepomuceno near the Argentine border that specializes in Indian girls. According to Jack Stoltz, a member of the U.S. evangelical New Tribes Mission and administrator of an Indian reservation, "the people around here like to have their own Guayaki [one of Paraguay's seventeen tribes]. It's sort of a status symbol." The Guaraní Nation, one of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pre-Columbian Paraguay's most important tribes, has been reduced from a population of more than 150,000 to less than 30,000. The Guayakis, who formed the other great tribe, have suffered a similar fate. "I have personally seen trophies of Guayaki heads in the homes of the ranchers," said Miguel Chase-Sardi, one of Paraguay's most prominent anthropologists, who was imprisoned and tortured for seven months this year because of his work with the Indians. "The persecution must be atrocious," he added, "because I have yet to see a single man from the Guayaki tribe without a bullet wound."

The government maintains there is nothing amiss. According to the defense ministry, "it is impossible to establish the crime of genocide because there is no proof of intent." In other words, reported the Asunción daily, *ABC Color,* killing Indians is not premeditated murder.

Not everyone accepts that logic. Both the International League for Human Rights and the Inter-American Association for Democracy and Liberty have protested at the United Nations against Indian genocide in Paraguay. Sen. James Abourezk of South Dakota spoke out in the U.S. Congress. He said, "A government dedicated to the extermination of a part of its people does not deserve our aid, any more than a convicted, self-confessed murderer deserves to receive a government welfare check."

Senator Abourezk might tell that to George Landau, U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay, whom Stroessner describes as an *ex officio* member of his Cabinet. With few exceptions, the U.S. Government has always turned a blind eye to the doings of the Stroessner government, although Washington has pumped $160 million into the regime's coffers since 1954. One exception to this general state of indifference was the arrest of anthropologist Chase-Sardi, which caused an international scandal and loud protests from his sponsor, the Inter-American Foundation of Arlington, Va. The other case was that of Auguste-Joseph Ricorde, Corsican kingpin of Latin America's U.S.-bound heroin trade and friend of the Paraguayan Government, which steadfastly refused to extradite him to the United States despite seventeen months of arm-twisting. Stroessner agreed to Ricorde's deportation in 1972 only after Washington closed credit lines worth $5 million. It isn't for lack of a weapon that Washington forbears.

But as for the political prisoners in Paraguayan jails, that is really an internal matter, and in any case Stroessner has told us they are "common delinquents." (Whatever the General calls them, there are 600 people in jail because of their political beliefs, and many of them have been tortured. Three have been in prison for eighteen years, five for fifteen years and twenty for eight to twelve years—the oldest "common delinquents" in Latin America.) As Amnesty International points out, "The United States has never officially acknowledged or taken steps to prevent the use of torture by a government which appears to be very much within its sphere of influence."

Actually, Stroessner does try to please the Americans by holding periodic elections. Even if they are a charade, they give the regime that veneer of democracy so important for foreign loans. Stroessner also has allowed token opposition to his Colorado Party from the Liberals and Liberal Radicals. However, they are hampered by limited access to the media and their followers are harassed and imprisoned. Moreover, no criticism is allowed of three of the most important subjects in Paraguay—Stroessner, the narcotics trade and contraband.

To insure their loyalty, Stroessner has divided up the contraband trade, both import and export, among the various military branches. The navy is in charge of whatever comes by way of river or the customs house, while the mounted guard has a monopoly on cigarettes and whiskey (Paraguay is the world's largest foreign consumer of U.S. cigarettes). The armed forces in the country's interior specialize in cattle, primarily for the Brazilian trade; the police have a monopoly on automobiles. So established is the smuggling profession that contraband goods are sold openly in smart shops located within walking distance of Asunción's tourist hotels.

As a State Department report describes it, "Paraguay has developed into a transient place for heroin from Europe to the United States, as well as for cocaine from South America. It seems to have been difficult for some officials of Paraguay to understand the importance of the effort of the United States to terminate the illegal drug traffic into our country." One of the most obtuse officials on this point, according to press reports, is Pastor Coronel, head of the country's criminal investigations department and reportedly a key organizer of the heroin trade. Coronel's involvement must be considerable if he was prepared to go to the lengths described by Agencia Noticiosa Paraguayana (ANP), with headquarters in Buenos Aires, after the British head of Brooke Bond Liebig's Paraguayan ranches was kidnapped by eight members of the Colorado Party.

According to ANP, Coronel arranged the kidnapping to embarrass Interior Minister Sabino Augusto Montanaro, who had infuriated Coronel by talking—blabbing might be a better description—to a *Reader's Digest* reporter about the narcotics trade. Coronel apparently convinced the kidnappers, all relatives and friends of Montanaro, that the job would be an easy way to milk the gringos. But as things turned out, the eight went to jail and Coronel's police received a $300,000 donation from Brooke Bond Liebig for obtaining the executive's release. Brooke Bond Oxo, the British parent company, later confirmed the essential details of the ANP story to a reporter from the London *Observer*. Such are the risks to foreign investors when thieves fall out in Paraguay.

It was under Coronel's jurisdiction that the Asunción woman I interviewed was tortured, one of hundreds so treated on charges of "Communist subversion." He also helped organize a rock-throwing reception for a Uruguayan bishop who had come to Asunción to intervene on behalf of a Uruguayan priest who had been kidnapped and tortured by the police. The Paraguayan Bishops Conference excommunicated Coronel as well as the interior minister and chief of police for their part in that 1971 incident.

While Stroessner never tires of pointing out how Christian his government is, Paraguayan church-state relations are the worst in Latin America. The only surviv-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing institution capable of criticizing the government, the Catholic Church has paid dearly for its independence. Since 1969, when war was declared between Church and state, nineteen priests and nuns have been arrested and expelled, numerous Catholic schools and seminaries have been disrupted and Church-sponsored peasant communities forcibly disbanded.

Typical of the repression was the crackdown at Jejui last year, where twenty-four families belonging to an agricultural Christian community were besieged by seventy soldiers, on charges that the community was headquarters for a guerrilla unit. Among those arrested were two Americans, Msgr. Roland Bordelon, Latin American director of the Catholic Relief Service, and Kevin Cahalan, executive director of the service in Paraguay; two French priests from the Little Brothers of Jesus; a Spanish nun; a Paraguayan deacon, and five peasants. The local priest, Father Braulio Maciel, was shot in the leg and repeatedly beaten. When the nun tried to intervene on his behalf, she, too, was beaten. (That same week a priest from Trinidad and an Italian religious were arrested, along with two Paraguayan deacons, during a military roundup of peasants in ten other communities.)

Attempts by the local bishop, Monsignor Maricevich, to reach Jejui were repeatedly rebuffed by the military. The bishop's life was threatened and he was told that Coronel had declared him *persona non grata*. The community's fields, houses and livestock were destroyed. The soldiers also stole $7,942, which had been donated by European Catholic organizations to enable the peasants to buy land.

All this was done to stamp out "Communist subversion." Yet as the bishops' weekly newspaper, *Sendero*, pointed out, no guerrillas or guns were found at the colony, only Bibles and peasant prayer books and "a priest whose mission is to pardon. 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' cried Father Maciel after they shot him."

Lay and religious leaders were arrested and tortured during this year's repression. In February the government seized the Jesuits' Cristo Rey primary and high school, Asunción's largest, most prestigious school. Ten priests from Cristo Rey, the Jesuit missions and the Paraguayan Bishops Conference, including Father Melia, one of the country's foremost anthropologists, were arrested and expelled. The Jesuits were singled out, explained the government, because of Jesuit Miguel Sanmarti's supposed participation in a Paraguayan guerrilla front with Argentina's Popular Revolutionary Army. However, Church documents notarized in Barcelona show that Sanmarti left Paraguay in 1974 and has been in Spain ever since.

Also molested were the Salesians' Carlos Pfanni Agricultural School, the Asunción seminary and the Jesuit provincial house. In the city of Villarrica the María Auxiliadora High School, the local seminary and the diocese's rural development institute were invaded by the police. Ten members of the U.S. Friendship Mission of the Disciples of Christ were arrested and two expelled, their rural projects with Indian peasants ended. Chase-Sardi's Marandú project for Indian education was closed.

Several of those arrested were killed under torture, including Mario Arzamenda, 61, a newspaper vendor who distributed *Sendero*, and Arturo Bernal, head of a peasants' cooperative in Piribebuy and the father of five children, aged 8 to 14.

The bloodletting undoubtedly would have continued had the Bishops Conference not published a document in June entitled "Between the Persecutions of the World and the Consolation of God," which denounced the indiscriminate repression of students, peasants and lay and religious leaders. "In these times of repression everyone is put in the same bag and those who are not Communists are, at the very least, naive idiots who are preparing the way for communism." Likening the repression to the persecution of the early Christian communities, the bishops asked Paraguayan Catholics to pray for Church martyrs and to overcome their fear. "The government cannot kill your souls," they said.

The document was signed by all the Paraguayan bishops, including the military vicar, Msgr. Juan Moleon, an honorary brigadier general who is highly regarded by the armed forces. The day after its publication Bishop Moleon read the riot act to the generals at a religious service at the military's Stella Maris Chapel.

At a Te Deum Mass at Asunción's cathedral Archbishop Ismael Rolon, an *ex officio* member of Stroessner's Council of State, told the President and his Cabinet that "the Paraguayan people live in a lamentable state of insecurity and fear." He also reminded Stroessner that under the constitution Catholicism is the official religion of Paraguay and its ministers guaranteed safeguards in recognition of "important services in education, Indian missions and charitable works."

Msgr. Demetrio Aquino, bishop of the national shrine of the Virgin of Caacupé, Paraguay's equivalent of Lourdes, followed this up with a fire-and-brimstone letter to Interior Minister Montanaro in which he stated that Montanaro had lied to him when he promised to intervene on behalf of Bernal and other peasants arrested in Piribebuy.

"Is this your answer?" he demanded. "The corpse of Arturo Bernal, the mourning of a peasant family, the desperation of a widow with five small, fatherless children? You undoubtedly have the tremendous responsibility for the cruel death of yet another citizen in the prisons of the ministry of which you are in charge. Mr. Minister, I am sure that the Virgin of Caacupé and Christ Our Lord will make those responsible for this unnecessary cruelty regret their act and that the Venerated Mother of all Paraguayans will demonstrate her authority with exemplary punishment."

In a country as Catholic as Paraguay, where failure to attend the family rosary is cause for social ostracism, no matter what the military rank of the sinner, the bishops' denunciations have been an acute embarrassment to the government. Military interference with Catholic schools also has boomeranged, since most of the children of the civilian and military elites are enrolled in these institutions. Not only did the government make no comment on "Persecutions"; within days of its publication several hundred political prisoners were quietly released. A fearless, dedicated hierarchy, Paraguay's bishops are totally

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

united in their opposition to the Stroessner government. "We will eat dirt before we betray our people," said Bishop Maricevich.

"Betray" is the word most frequently used by critics of the Stroessner regime, for many Paraguayans are genuinely concerned that the government is selling the country to the highest foreign bidders, principally to Brazilians. The Bishops Conference, for example, believes that its first priority in the coming years will be to help the people maintain a sense of national identity in the face of Brazil's economic and cultural invasion.

Vadillo, El Sol de Mexico

Like neighboring Uruguay, Paraguay has always been a buffer between the continent's two giants—Brazil and Argentina. But unlike Uruguay, which is really a cultural extension of Argentina, Paraguay has a rich heritage of its own based on the country's highly diverse Indian tribes. For all the rhetoric about flag and fatherland, however, Paraguay's ruling elites have little sense of genuine nationalism. The real nationalists are the poor, with their deep love for the country and its customs, but since most of them are Guaraní-speaking peasants and slum dwellers they do not count. Indicative of the elite's scorn for all things Paraguayan was its disdain for the country's melodic harp folk music. It was only after Buenos Aires, the region's cultural mecca, "rediscovered" Paraguayan music that Asunción's wealthy began to play it in their homes.

History never gave Paraguay's ruling classes the opportunity to develop a pride of nationality. Constant wars and internal fighting in the 19th and 20th centuries killed off successive generations of intellectuals and political leaders, one group of bloodthirsty upstarts replacing another. (Stroessner is the son of a German immigrant.) Given such an historical background, it is not surprising that the country's wealthy minority scorns its Spanish and Indian origins, preferring anything that is foreign.

Nowadays the principal influence is Brazilian; Portuguese is fast becoming the third language of the country. Such Paraguayan publications as the monthly *Flash* devote half their pages to praise of Brazilian government and business leaders. Brazilian real estate companies have bought up huge tracts of Paraguayan frontier land and sent 30,000 Brazilian farmers to colonize the area. The Brazilians also have invested heavily in local industry, spending nearly $200 million this year on subsidiaries in soybean processing, agribusiness, iron, steel, paper and cement. As a result, Paraguay is no longer a buffer state but a Brazilian satellite. If the economic and cultural invasion continues, the country will eventually be swallowed by its giant neighbor.

Even Stroessner's own Colorados are beginning to doubt the wisdom of this course, since Paraguay has nothing to gain by joining Brazil's orbit. In the past the country has always fared better by following Uruguay's example of playing Argentina and Brazil against each other to extract concessions from both. That could be particularly true today when the country is beginning to harness its enormous hydroelectric potential in a series of multi-billion-dollar projects on the mighty Paraná River. With few proven mineral resources and very little industry, Paraguay's untapped hydroelectric wealth of 30 million kilowatts is the country's only avenue to economic development. But instead of demanding the best possible terms for its hydroelectrical riches, in the usual Argentine-Brazilian play-off, the Stroessner government chose to give the Brazilians an exceptionally favorable contract for the $7 billion Itaipu complex on the Paraná, thus formalizing Paraguay's satellite position and breaking the traditional balance of power between Argentina and Brazil.

Although Paraguay is providing the natural resource, Brazil will have administrative control over the bi-national project and receive 75 per cent of the profits from its construction. These concessions are minor, however, by comparison with Paraguay's pledge to sell all of Itaipu's 12.6-million-kilowatt output to Brazil for the same price for fifty years, with no possibility of upward revision.

In today's nationalistic Third World even the most Neanderthal multinational would think twice about such a contract since, sooner or later, it is bound to cause the local resentment and acrimonious arguments over revision which often lead to nationalization. Some Brazilians, at least, fear such a possibility. Itaipu "could be our equivalent of the Panama Canal," warned Marcones Ferraz, former head of the Brazilian state electrical company, Electrobras.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OUR LATIN AMERICAN POLL WATCHERS

PENNY LERNOUX

Bogotá

Uruguayan President Aparicio Mendez is a nervous wreck these days. He keeps having nightmares of a Communist takeover in Washington, led by Jimmy Carter with that "seditious" Edward Kennedy in the van. An obscure political hack who was named President by the country's armed forces when no other civilian would take the job, Mendez has the bad habit of saying publicly what many of the region's military dictators think privately. "If you ask me who is the [world's] leading partner in sedition, I say it is the Democratic Party of the United States," he told the Uruguayan daily *La Mañana*, adding that those "publicity seeking Kennedys are the worst."

Mendez went on to describe how Argentina, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and France were "paying for this sedition," insisting that the United States is "going to pay dearly for this, too." The generals must have told Mendez to shut up because the day after the interview was published, the President closed the newspaper, denying he had said anything about sedition, even though *La Mañana* has a tape of the interview.

Mendez's "delirium of persecution," as a Colombian columnist described it, may seem exaggerated, but it is a pretty good reflection of the fears of South America's military dictators. Both the Chilean and Uruguayan Governments are unhappy about recent cutoffs in U.S. military and economic aid, which they blame on "puritanical" Democratic Congressmen who are "excessively preoccupied with human rights." Argentina's junta has also come under Congressional scrutiny for violating human rights, and Paraguay and Brazil could be next. Already, Uruguay's generals are proposing an alliance among the regimes of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to resist "pressure groups that want to utilize North American influence," meaning human rights organizations.

Reported *El Soldado*, the Uruguayan military's monthly magazine: "For the Latin American countries, particularly those of the southern zone, the elections [in the United States] could be of singular importance." Opponents of the Uruguayan regime agree, pointing out that the elections may be a turning point for that small, terrorized country. "The Democrats have given Wilson Ferreira [one of Uruguay's most important political leaders, now in exile] a sympathetic hearing and indicated that they would support a change in government," an informed source told me in Montevideo. Similar hopes were expressed by Brazilians, Chileans and Paraguayans.

Many Latin Americans also were pleased with Carter's criticisms of a U.S.-Brazilian agreement, signed by Henry Kissinger, that reconfirmed Brazil's special relationship with the United States. (Former President Nixon's remark that "as Brazil goes so will the rest of Latin America" still rankles, particularly among those who prefer democracy to a right-wing dictatorship.)

While the average Latin American reader knows little about Carter except that he is a peanut farmer and a Democrat, those who are allowed to express an opinion in the continent's few surviving democracies agree that "he has to be better than Ford."

"Any change in U.S. policy will be an improvement over the present situation," wrote Juan del Tobosa, columnist for Bogotá's *El Tiempo*, Colombia's most prestigious paper. "If Ford is elected, he will continue with Kissinger, which means we will be stuck with the Kissinger doctrine, a policy that is famous in Latin America precisely because it is nonexistent."

Latin America's generals have litlte personal liking for Kissinger either, primarily because he so studiously ignores them. On the other hand, he helped to set up the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, thereby eliminating the threat of a left-wing government in the region. Carter, on the other hand, is viewed as a potential impediment, particularly on the issue of human rights. (Whether warranted or not, the Democrats have a reputation as liberal progressives in Latin America, whereas the Republicans are identified with the multinationals.)

Like Tobosa, the U.S. National Council of Churches believes the situation in Latin America could not be worse, with its "immense prison to serve the economic interests of the United States." A Carter victory might help to open some prison doors, but whether it would alter the basic premise of U.S.-Latin American relations is questionable. Money will continue to direct Latin American policy as long as the only people interested in the area are businessmen. Apart from a few scholars and religious organizations, the only Americans who are well informed on Latin American affairs are the representatives of U.S. companies with subsidiaries in the region. That they often twist the facts to suit their interests is to be expected. That they are the only source of information in most cases (i.e., Allende's Chile) is tragic.

The only difference thus far between the Democrats and the Republicans is that the former have been better at public relations. Although the Alliance for Progress is now repudiated by Latin Americans as a sop, John Kennedy is still held in high regard because he paid Latin America the compliment of giving it some attention.

It would be useful if someone sympathetic to the needs and desires of the majority of Latin Americans would now look ahead, instead of trying to whitewash such old friends as the Somozas and the Stroessners. The we'll-deal-with-the-crisis-when-it-arrives attitude that passes for Latin American policy is both outdated and imprudent, particularly when the continent's "storehouse" of minerals and food is so important to the United States in this world of diminishing natural resources.

No understanding of the region is possible, however, so long as the United States insists on imposing its own preconceived ideas of economics and social behavior on the Latin Americans. A case in point is the recent assassination of Orlando Letelier. Both the CIA and the FBI apparently have arrived at the conclusion that his murder could not have been the work of the Pinochet regime because it is obviously counterproductive to Santiago's campaign to obtain U.S. financial and diplomatic support.

Whether or not the Pinochet government was responsible, the conclusions of the CIA and the FBI show a naive lack of understanding of the Chilean generals. Others might think such actions "stupid" or "counterproductive"; the generals don't. How else explain the recent rock-throwing reception organized by the Chilean secret police for three bishops at the Santiago airport just when President Pinochet was supposedly wooing the Catholic Church? Or the arrest of a group of teenage sons of U.S. diplomatic personnel by the Chilean police the night before Treasury Secretary Simon arrived in Santiago to discuss loans?

Many Latin Americans would say the Yankees are the stupid ones.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As long as Stroessner and his henchmen are in power, however, Brasilia has nothing to fear. Any Paraguayan who dares openly to criticize the contract runs the same risk as did Robert Thompson Molinas, former editorial secretary of *ABC Color,* who was jailed for four months because the newspaper dared question its terms. While few Paraguayans have the temerity of Thompson Molinas, privately they are extremely bitter. "They have sold my children's birthright," complained an angry Paraguayan engineer. The payoffs to Paraguayan negotiators, according to inside sources, were more than $1 million, and that is just the down payment in the graft that must be paid during the decade when Itaipu is in construction.

Itaipu is the biggest, most controversial sellout to date, but there are plenty of other, smaller deals for the ambitious; for example, land sales to Brazilians, even though they entail evicting the Paraguayan peasants on the land. In one recent incident near Villarrica, 250 peasants were forced at gunpoint to abandon 2,500 acres, so that the Paraguayan real estate firm, Ruis and Jorba, could sell the land to a Brazilian company. One of the largest local landowners, Gen. Otello Carpinelli, head of the II Military Region headquartered in Villarrica, has been accused of using troops to carry out evictions.

Twenty foreign companies, mostly Brazilian, now own 30 per cent of the nation's land, Paraguay's principal source of income and jobs. The statistics are even worse in the industrial and commercial sectors with twelve of the country's fifteen biggest companies in foreign hands. Ninety per cent of the banking and 80 per cent of the exports are controlled by foreigners, and now Stroessner is auctioning off the country's mineral resources.

Ignoring protests from the Paraguayan Steel Works (SIDEPAR), owned by the armed forces, Stroessner recently gave one of the juiciest contracts in Latin American history to the Anschutz Corp. of Denver, Colo.—a forty-year concession for all mineral rights in a 61,710-square-mile radius covering the eastern half of the country. SIDEPAR, formed to explore for minerals, was denied access to the area.

In return for this generous contract, Anschutz need only invest $1.4 million, and that over a period of nine years. Royalties to the government will average 3 per cent of the gross profits until the company recovers its investment, when they may go as high as 10 per cent. (The usual starting figure for royalties from mining concessions in other Latin American countries is 66 per cent.) Anschutz is exempted from all taxes. Moreover, it has the right to expropriate any land deemed necessary for mining operations (guarantees for damages to third parties are a mere $10,000). The Paraguayan Government also agreed to reimburse the company for any losses suffered from the "exhaustion of a mine."

Paraguay's opposition parties, outraged by this "scandalous gift," unanimously denounced a "contract that endangers the national sovereignty." Their protests hardly matter, however, since the U.S. Embassy and the Inter-American Development Bank approved the deal.

With gifts of this sort to be had, it is no wonder that Washington is uninterested in human rights. Business executives are concerned about profits, not political prisoners, and since business still directs U.S. Latin American policy, there can be no room for namby-pamby doubts about the moral issues involved. Besides, Stroessner is a staunch anti-Communist.

Americans frequently are puzzled by the hostility of other advanced nations, and most developing nations. "Why don't they like us?" I hear repeatedly. The answer is the friends we keep. Yesterday it was the Batistas and the Trujillos. Today it is the Stroessners and the Pinochets.

When will we learn? □

Namibia: The Pretense of Concern

PATRICK L. SMITH

United Nations, N.Y.

Shuttle diplomacy and European conferences with southern Africa's white minority leaders were said to be the encouraging results of the "new African policy" Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger claimed to have launched in Lusaka, Zambia, on April 27. But after the three weeks of Security Council debates on South Africa's continuing presence in Namibia (South-West Africa), the Secretary's mission in southern Africa seems rather to have been to apply a new strategy to a very old policy, namely that outlined in the much publicized (and recently published) National Security Study Memorandum #39, written under Mr. Kissinger's supervision in 1969 and put into effect in the first months of 1970. Of the choices presented in that once confidential document, Option 2 was eventually adopted. It called for "public opposition to racial repression but [the relaxation of] political and economic restrictions on the white states." The argument for that position was simple: "our tangible interests form a basis for our contacts in the region, and these can be maintained at an acceptable political cost."

The U. S. veto of the Security Council's resolutions calling for sanctions and arms embargoes against South Africa because it has failed to meet U.N. demands that it proceed to end its occupation of Namibia, was a significant demonstration of that policy's continuing efficacy in Washington. Before and during the debates, U. S. officials worked vigorously behind the scenes to stall the sessions and avoid the posture struck by a veto. The sessions were postponed twice and came close to cancellation, according to some sources here, before they finally convened on September 28. As the United States had anticipated, one African delegation after another began calling for the enforcement of Chapter 7 of the United

Patrick Smith is a journalist and editor now studying international affairs at Columbia University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nations Charter—the one authorizing sanctions in areas where there is a significant threat to international peace and security. Those resolutions were finally put to a vote by Guyana on October 18; the U.S. veto, backed by Britain and France, followed immediately.

It was an important step for the African bloc. "We have been warned that the Western powers are going to veto," said Theo-Ben Gurirab, head of the U.N. Observer Mission of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), in an interview midway in the debates. "But it is important from the political point of view that we force them to veto, so that their intentions in the region are exposed. . . . There is a lot of talk, but there is very little action. The veto will help us expose this duplicity."

U. S. Ambassador William Scranton, citing "the delicate fabric of negotiations," told the Security Council, "Substantial progress has been made toward reaching a peaceful settlement to the Namibian problem in consultation with South Africa and the interested African parties. . . . We do not feel that the measures called for in the draft resolution before us will improve the chances to gain a free and independent Namibia."

Mr. Scranton avoided all mention of the South-West Africa People's Organization in his speech. Even South Africa has acknowledged that SWAPO, the broad political and military front that is recognized by the U.N. as the territory's legitimate representative, has the support of an estimated 70 per cent of Namibia's 900,000 Africans. But South Africa has effectively banned the organization since 1963, and has consistently refused to negotiate with its leaders.

That position had not changed by the day of the final voting here, and the U.S. veto. On the last day of the debate in the Security Council, *The New York Times* published an interview with Prime Minister Vorster, in which he spoke without qualification about negotiations: "I have nothing to say to SWAPO at all," he told *Times* correspondent John F. Burns.

Sources in the African bloc assert that they were misled several times by the U. S. delegation. On one such occasion, an African minister was summoned to Washington, allegedly because South Africa had agreed, suddenly and inexplicably, to negotiate with SWAPO. Sanctions would, therefore, be unnecessary. A Security Council session—the one at which the question of sanctions was expected to be moved—had to be cancelled.

The claim turned out to be unfounded. It is possible also that Mr. Scranton's claim of "significant progress" was a bit of deception. There has never been any evidence to support Mr. Kissinger's boasts of progress on the Namibian question. The other implication in Mr. Scranton's statement is that Washington approves of the "solution" for Namibia being imposed by South Africa.

Situated west of South Africa along the Atlantic coast up to Angola's southern border, Namibia has been an effective buffer between South Africa and its northern neighbors ever since it was wrested from German control during World War I. In that half century or more, South Africa and Namibia's 90,000 whites have also developed considerable holdings in the area, notably in mining, fishing and sheep farming.

Copper has been mined extensively in the north-central region near Tsumeb since the early years of the century. The territory's first uranium project, the $220 million Rossing uranium mine, on the Atlantic coast some 40 miles north of Swakopmund, was due to begin delivering ore for processing in July of this year. The largest open-pit uranium mine in southern Africa, Rossing was launched by Rio Tinto-Zinc Ltd., a British multinational corporation, through agreements with the South African Government. Planned production for the mine is already committed through the late 1980s, and Britain, according to a report by its Atomic Energy Authority, has been counting on Rossing for at least half its uranium needs through 1982.

The Rossing project and its source of electric power are an interesting example of the kind of economic integration South Africa has been striving to effect between its own territory and that of Namibia. All the uranium mined at Rossing becomes, by agreement with the companies developing the site, the property of the South African Government once it emerges from the ground. It will be sold by the South African Government, even though Rio Tinto-Zinc owns a controlling interest—53.6 per cent—in the enterprise.

The Rossing plant will get its electricity from the Cunene River hydroelectric project at Ruacana Falls on the Angolan border. Vorster has steadfastly maintained that the dam was built for "the good of the people of South-West Africa," and that South Africa would "gain nothing." But indications are that the Rossing project and others like it are the beneficiaries of the $720 million dam. And power grids already constructed will connect the dam with South Africa proper.

However, most sources interviewed at the U.N. in recent weeks agree that not economics but the strategic geopolitical position of Namibia has become South Africa's principal motive for remaining there. Until the past few years, the territory's position in the South African defense system has not been crucial. However, with the escalated independence processes in Portugal's former African colonies, it became clear that a tranquil subcontinent, with white colonial regimes insulating South Africa from its black neighbors, would soon be a thing of the past. For that reason, in the view of one source here, "South Africa is not going to give up Namibia unless it is forced to—or unless it is forced to pay a very high price." South Africa's principal line of defense, this source points out, is still along the Angolan border with Namibia. There are no defensive positions along the

HAVE YOU THOUGHT

Of giving a Nation gift subscription to a friend? A subscription is an especially meaningful gift for a young person away at school, or to anyone you feel would benefit from the news and reviews published in The Nation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Orange River, the South African border with Namibia.

Although South Africa's original mandate for administering Namibia was terminated by the U.N. ten years ago, it is only in recent months that Pretoria has shown interest in meeting any of the U.N.'s numerous deadlines for ending its control. Now, with the rapid changes occurring throughout the whole subcontinent, it has become obvious to Pretoria that a "solution" of one kind or another must be found in Namibia. Accordingly, a month after its first incursions into Angola in August 1975, South Africa launched a constitutional conference in Windhoek, Namibia's capital, for the professed purpose of determining the outlines of an independent Namibia.

From their inception, however, it was evident that the Turnhalle talks—named for an old German drill hall in which they are taking place—were designed to install a client regime in Namibia, a regime that would remain almost wholly dependent on South Africa economically and strategically, but which could be hailed by Pretoria as "independent." The conference demonstrates the crux of the South African strategy and, finally, the strategy of the United States: In southern Africa there is a vast difference between "black majority rule" and fundamental change; support for the former in no way implies encouragement for the latter.

In keeping with the apartheid system, for example, the Turnhalle talks were designed by South Africa along purely ethnic lines, even though the ethnic distinctions applied to Africans are not generally significant among Namibians. South Africa created eleven ethnic delegations, including that of the whites. The representatives of each ethnic group were hand-picked for pliancy by the white administration.

Once in conference, negotiations are carried out on a consensus basis, giving the white delegation virtual veto power over any objectionable proposals the docile African "representatives" may be stirred to champion. For example, a series of talks was recently concluded on the present migrant labor system. African delegations had proposed its immediate abolition after "independence," but the white delegation argued that the system, known as contract labor, the backbone of the present white-controlled economy, was too efficient to be eliminated. No consensus was reached and the proposal was dropped.

Through the Turnhalle talks South Africa is attempting to answer the U.N.'s most recent deadline for significant progress toward U.N.-supervised national elections in Namibia, and an end to the South African administration and military occupation. On August 18, the "Constitutional Committee of the South-West Africa Constitutional Conference" issued a statement "reaffirming" the conference's "conviction that a real and permanent solution to our country's problems" can be found through the talks. There was no mention of elections in the statement, which was relayed here by the South African Mission. "Self-determination," it said, can be achieved by December 31, 1978, "with reasonable certainty." The date, more than two years away, came as a surprise at the United Nations, since mid-1977 was the target that had been anticipated.

It is now likely that the talks will produce an "interim government" prior to the date set for independence. The participants have already presented a draft constitution which would set up a bicameral legislature in Namibia, giving the majority one house and reserving the other for the white minority. This measure, says

"Dr. Kissinger, I Presume?"

The Washington Star

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sean Gervasi, a consultant in the Office of the Commissioner of Namibia, the U.N. body designated to administer the territory until the time of national elections, "raises the white minority constitutionally to a co-equal position of power."

"It's brilliant strategy," Gervasi concedes. "What is being sought is the establishment of a government which would be willing to continue with the present arrangements with South Africa. . . . There might be some lifting of restrictions on movement and things like that. But basically apartheid would remain in place."

More specifically, however, the *Windhoek Advertiser,* a relatively liberal daily published in the Namibian capital, reported on August 18 on details of a proposal for the interim government then being urged by four of the conference's ten African groups.

"Certain subjects would continue to fall under the jurisdiction of the Republic of South Africa," the *Advertiser* noted. "Control over any military or police force in South-West Africa; the entrance of immigrants or other persons; tariffs for customs and the control thereof; money and banking matters and the control of finances; the jurisdiction and structure of law courts; tax and income; the business of international matters; the administration, management and control of post and telegraphs, telephones and railways."

Whatever their internal faults, however, the chief shortcoming of the constitutional talks, in the Western view, has been their exclusion of SWAPO. The organization's absence has been the main blow to Turnhalle's credibility, and it is clear that the Kissinger effort has not been directed at any change in the nature of the talks, but only on cosmetic improvement of their appearance. "The problems remaining consist of finding a negotiating forum in which the nationalist group that is acceptable to African leaders, the South-West Africa People's Organization, can take part," Bernard Gwertzman wrote in *The New York Times* on September 12, "and in which South Africa would also be represented to work out such details as elections and the removal of South African forces from the territory."

In fact, there are now concrete indications that Kissinger's diplomacy has been part of a highly regulated, well-financed plan to by-pass SWAPO, prop up the Turnhalle talks, and make preparations for massive U.S. assistance to the "interim government" they will produce.

¶ According to current plans, the Namibian Government will be led by a white Prime Minister, Durk Mudge, and headed by a largely ceremonial President, Chief Clemens Kapuuo, the current head of the Herero delegation at Turnhalle. Although Kapuuo commands little support in his own community, an American public relations firm known as Psycomm has been flying him between Windhoek, London and Washington. He has had broad exposure to U.S. business interests and members of Congress, and at least one U.N. source has speculated on the close links that may exist between Psycomm and the CIA.

¶ The United States is preparing to provide "substantial international assistance" to the interim government, once it is installed. According to a confidential document circulated to African delegations during the recent Security Council debates, a $350,000 study project is being carried out by the Agency for International Development to determine ways whereby the existing economic infrastructure can be strengthened after independence. "It is probably not by accident," the document notes, "that a number of senior 'investigators' associated with the project have long records of involvement with the Central Intelligence Agency."

¶ According to the same document, the United States has proposed to train, finance and equip a "Namibian Army" that would make it possible for South Africa to withdraw its forces from the territory. A report from Zurich, where Kissinger and Vorster met, in the September 19th *Dublin Sunday Times,* written by a former U.N. adviser in Africa, provides more detail on the pledge:

> A new black Namibian armed force would then be created, trained by United States military personnel, equipped by the U.S. and financed by the U.S. for at least a decade. What the limit would be on the number of United States military advisers is not known. It is intended that a large proportion of the American soldiers and other personnel working in Namibia should be black.

Internationally and in its own press, South Africa has preferred to concentrate on the constitutional talks and their developments, rather than on its rapidly escalating war with SWAPO. But there is growing evidence that the war in the northern Ovambo and Okavango regions and in the Caprivi Strip to the east has reached critical proportions. In mid-May, the *Rand Daily Mail* reported that "the tightest security control in South-West African history has been imposed on Ovambo and a virtual state of emergency exists in the troubled area. . . ." Shortly thereafter, South Africa created its present 1,000-mile "free fire zone," a half-mile-wide strip running the length of Namibia's northern border.

On June 22, the *Windhoek Advertiser* appeared with a blank front page. Its German-language affiliate, *Allgemeine Zeitung,* was suppressed before it could be distributed. "A report yesterday about infiltration of armed insurgents could result in dejection among the general public," a court statement said of the seizure of the *Zeitung.* The editor of the *Advertiser* ran a front-page editorial in his June 23rd edition: "My motivation to publish stemmed from the simple fact that the authorities are failing to keep the inhabitants of this country informed about the true state of affairs."

In the same issue it was announced that the South-West Africa Anti-Terror Fund would offer "R10,000 [about $12,000], immediately payable, to any person giving information which could lead to the detection of any terrorist or terror band south of the Ovamboland border." Sources at the U.N. believe the suppressed story to have been an account of a major battle between SWAPO guerrillas and South African counterinsurgency forces near Tsumeb, a mining town in the "white area" south

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Ovamboland border. If so, it was one of SWAPO's deepest penetrations into white-controlled areas.

Estimates compiled by the U.N.'s Office of the Commissioner of Namibia place the number of increasingly well-armed and well-trained SWAPO guerrillas now operating in northern areas at 3,000 to 5,000. They quickly add, however, "That's a low-range estimate," based on figures released by the South African Defense Department. Estimates of the number of South African troops now active in Namibia run to 50,000.

U.N. sources also point to the vast complex of South African Army bases developed in northern Namibia in the past five years, and the secondary outposts that literally dot a map of the Ovambo and Okavango border areas. But perhaps more alarming than the rapid escalation of the South African military presence in Namibia is the increased flow of Western arms to South Africa's defense system.

Chief among these developments is the electronic sensor system supplied to South Africa by Marconi Communications Systems Ltd. In direct violation of already declared arms embargoes, the British corporation is helping to construct a monitoring system that has turned the whole of northern Namibia into an electronic battlefield. It has also been reported that Israel is supplying South Africa with defense-related electronic equipment. Investigative sources in Washington said recently that AEG-Telefunken, the West German electronics manufacturer, "may be even more deeply involved than Marconi."

Sean Gervasi and others view this as "direct military involvement" in South Africa's war with Namibia. And they add that there are "hundreds of subterranean rivers" of indirect military supply. "Virtually every major piece of military equipment that the South Africans have has come in the past five or six or ten years from the United States, Britain, France, West Germany or Italy," Gervasi maintains. He gives an example: "There is a very modern U. S.-armored personnel carrier called the V 150 Commando that's produced by the Cadillac Gage Co. in Detroit. We don't know how they arrived in South Africa, but they are produced only by Cadillac Gage, and we know that South Africa has at least 100 of them and that some have been used in Namibia."

SWAPO did not become an active military organization until August 1966, when the decision was taken to launch the guerrilla war that has now endured continuously for ten years. Eleven years of political and diplomatic agitation preceded that decision.

In 1955, Namibian migrant workers on contract in the Cape Province of South Africa had founded the Ovambo People's Organization. In the years of its first formation, the organization was strongly influenced by South Africa's African National Congress, one of the oldest African nationalist organizations on the continent. Even during its last years as the OPO, the organization had taken on a strong national character, had taken members of Namibia's various ethnic groups, and had widened its horizons from opposition to the contract labor system, to apartheid, to the entire colonial system prevailing in Namibia. SWAPO emerged from the OPO in 1960, an explicitly nationalist group.

SWAPO's strong nationalist stand is vividly expressed in its view of the Turnhalle conference or other proposed forums of negotiations with South Africa. "We do not in any way consider the crowd that's meeting in Windhoek to be representative of the interests and aspirations for freedom and independence of our people," SWAPO's Gurirab, who has recently become head of the organization's political bureau, told me in a recent interview. "It is not only SWAPO that has said so but the various communities inside Namibia have also rejected and condemned the people who are meeting there."

One proposal that the United States has been batting about recently has been for SWAPO to meet with South Africa in Geneva as one of some twenty delegations. Although SWAPO has always maintained its willingness to negotiate with South Africa, Gurirab says: "We are obviously talking at cross-purposes here."

"Should South Africa and the Western countries that are exploiting the natural resources of our country feel that some of the puppets meeting in Windhoek are important to their purposes, then they can bring them as part of their own delegation and have them sit on their side of the table," Gurirab continued. "They would not be part of the Namibian delegation."

Would any such Namibian delegation include organizations other than SWAPO?

"We specifically have been impressed, encouraged, and inspired by the stance that the religious community has taken in Namibia," Gurirab said. "In spite of their impediments—their pacifism, for example—the religious leaders have come out in support of the struggle. And there are other small groups, some of them tribal, but which have been progressive. So when the principle [of negotiation] has been accepted, then we would sit down and decide who else should be included in the Namibian delegation at a conference."

But there are preconditions to SWAPO's willingness to negotiate, and those terms—including agreement on territorial integrity, the withdrawal of South African troops, and the release of political prisoners—are likely to preclude the possibility of bilateral negotiations. "These are conditions which South Africa really doesn't want to accept, and that's why it's important that SWAPO has stated them," the U.N.'s Gervasi notes. "The fact that South Africa won't accept them means that they cannot be incorporated into the constitutional arrangements being drawn together now." The organization's first goal after achieving independence is to hold the national elections that South Africa has refused to permit.

Until recently, SWAPO's military strategy—which has been viewed as much more important than its diplomatic efforts—has been to fight a low-intensity war in northern Namibia, predominantly in Ovamboland, the north-central province that South Africa declared a Bantustan in 1968. Because of Namibia's difficult terrain, SWAPO has not, until very recently indeed, penetrated far south, and has not sought to establish liberated zones.

But there are signs that the old strategy is changing, particularly with the availability of increased arms sup-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plies. "We are thinking in terms of launching very extensive operations in Namibia," Gurirab says, "and for that to be effective we have to plan, we have to train cadres, we have to arm them, and we have to provide both the political and military infrastructure that will enable us to advance and retreat, and accommodate any effort on the part of South Africa to break through our defenses.

"On the other hand," Gurirab continued, "as a result of our own intensification—the opening of new operational zones beyond what was our traditional zone of operation in the north—we have now moved south toward the center of our country. Because of these efforts on the military front, South Africa has correspondingly expanded its military presence in Namibia."

Few observers of Namibia expect South Africa to succeed in containing the war they now believe to be far advanced already. With evidence growing of the sort of Western military supply now surfacing, the chief concern among those interviewed in recent weeks is what South Africa will do—and what will its allies do—as the situation deteriorates. In this context, the chief function of the "interim government" about to be installed may be to give South Africa, now fighting a "secret war," something "legitimate" to defend. □

URBAN HOMESTEADING

MAYBE THE BEST DEAL IN TOWN

MARK T. ZIMMERMAN

When the government starts to give away houses for $1 you know there's got to be a catch. There is. The houses are in need of repairs, which may cost $3,000, $10,000, or more in some cases. Not only that, the person who undertakes to make the repairs in return for ownership must also agree to live in the renovated house for at least three to five years.

Does it still sound good? It is. That's why more than 180 cities throughout the United States are considering urban homesteading. In 1975 the federal government approved a $5 million appropriation to demonstrate the practicality of the idea in various settings of twenty-two major U.S. cities. It will also make HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development) properties available to the cities that decide to try it. HUD holds title at present to some 250,000 houses, most of them acquired through defaults on FHA (Federal Housing Authority) loans.

Wilmington, Del. in May 1973, was the first city to enact an Urban Homesteading Act; it anticipated the federal government by almost two years. Wilmington, with a population of 80,000, holds title to between 1,500 and 2,000 abandoned houses. On August 24, 1973, the city gave away ten houses. In preparation for that day, advertisements had been placed in the local papers, advising interested applicants of the details, requirements and deadline. There were 300 applicants for the ten houses. The Wilmington Homestead Board reviewed the applications, taking into consideration family size, financial status, experience as tenants or owners, and construction skills; forty applicants survived this screening. When there was more than one qualified applicant for a given house, a lottery was used to decide.

The first house in the drawing, built in 1884, was awarded to Daniel S. Frawley, a 31-year-old attorney for E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co. and his wife, Bonita, a 33-year-old schoolteacher in a Wilmington suburb. However, the house that they finally settled into was far from a gift; in fact they spent close to $18,000 to renovate it completely, using for capital a combination of loans and savings.

"We could have done the minimum," says Frawley. "Spent $6,000 to $8,000, which is what a lot of Wilmington homesteaders are doing." But the Frawleys wanted more. They gutted the entire interior of the three-story house and rebuilt from scratch. Since they were both working at full-time jobs, most of the work had to be done on contract. They pitched in over weekends. When they had finished, they considered the house finer than the one they had sold in Devon, Pa. for $45,000. Their monthly payments on the building loans amount to $116.

As of December 1975, only twenty of the original thirty-five Wilmington homesteaders remained with the plan. Of those, twelve had completed the renovations and the other eight were expected to finish by the summer of 1976. The requirements for homesteaders in Wilmington are that they be at least 18 years of age, the head of a household, a U.S. citizen, that they agree to bring the house up to building code standards within eighteen months, and that they agree to live in the house for no less than three years. When the three years are up the city turns the title over to the homesteader. Wilmington gives the homesteader a tax break during the first five years by allowing the deduction of 50 per cent of repair costs from the assessed value.

On all major points, the Wilmington program is typical—since it was the first of its kind, many of its details have been copied in other cities. It is an appealing, even a heartening idea, but it never touches the core of the country's housing problem. All urban homesteading programs (with the exception of New York's) solicit young, middle-income, married couples. Since the cost of restoring an abandoned house can be considerable, it is generally felt that only middle-income families should attempt it. Also, many lower-income families would find

Mark Zimmerman is a recent graduate of Boston University's School of Public Communication.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it hard to secure a mortgage loan. But one asset that every homesteading program advocates is "sweat equity" —what the homesteader can save by doing part, or most, of the work himself. In many cases it can amount to 20 to 40 per cent of professional contracting fees for a fully renovated house. Unfortunately, sweat equity is intangible. Therefore, what protection does a homesteader have if, after spending some months or even a year on a house, using much of his own labor, he is forced to drop the project?

"None," says John Coggershell, a city planner for the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA). "The titles aren't transferred to the homesteader until the three-year period is up. If the homesteader changes his mind and moves, he loses all the time, money and effort that he put into the house." Even the remote possibility of such a loss will make many people think twice before taking the plunge. But once in, they have an incentive to persevere.

Credit for the idea of urban homesteading goes to Councilman Joseph E. Coleman of Philadelphia, who conceived it in 1968 and has since become chairman of that city's Urban Homestead Board. Ironing out initial difficulties took some time, but Philadelphia started operating its program in July 1973. The housing problem there is much worse than in Wilmington. By 1973, 36,000 houses were vacant in Philadelphia, 1,200 of them owned by the city itself. During the first week of the program more than 3,000 would-be homesteaders applied for the first available houses.

Since then the Philadelphia Urban Homestead Board has organized what it calls an effective program of recycling 300 homes a year. Its emphasis is on controlling the deterioration of neighborhoods by both upgrading the homestead houses and at the same time getting the community involved in every possible way. To do this successfully, however, the sites for homesteading are selected in neighborhoods where there is at least 65 per cent home ownership; in many cases the percentages are closer to 85 and 90 per cent. In neighborhoods of that sort the homestead site tends to have been the major eyesore in the community. Thus by turning an object of neighborhood concern into a symbol of pride, the homesteading idea wins community support. The neighborhoods are improved in other ways; for example, by creating small parks out of vacant lots or by hauling away abandoned cars. The idea is to encourage reinvestment in the neighborhood, to protect its value as well as the homesteader's equity.

Perhaps the most unusual of the urban homesteading organizations is the Urban-Homesteading Assistance Board (U-HAB), a New York City-based, nonprofit private agency that helps low-income New Yorkers rehabilitate abandoned properties. It doesn't lend or give money for renovations, but offers advice on financing as well as technical assistance once a project is started. It occasionally advances some seed money to start a project, but in most cases works with those who seek better housing through their own sweat equity.

"Homesteading in New York *does* reach low-income people, including street gangs, church parishioners, ex-addicts and offenders, Muslims, welfare families, the unemployed, elderly, and numerous Latin nationalities," says Ian Donald Terner, an M.I.T. professor who directed U-HAB in 1975.

"The people in the program are the city's most desperate, struggling to maintain lives, jobs and families in the worst buildings and neighborhoods in the city. Program participants are rarely enthusiastic about renovating a building—they are driven to it, and to the year of hard, often discouraging work, by an absolute lack of alternatives."

And U-HAB differs from other programs not only in the kinds of people it seeks to help but also in the types of buildings it will consider. The first building to be renovated consisted of six apartments. When it was finished, each homesteader was assessed $78 a month for a one-bedroom apartment and $102 for a four-bedroom duplex. This "rent" was used to pay back a $32,000 municipal loan acquired at 6 per cent interest for twenty-five years. U-HAB's next project was started by a Harlem street gang, the Renegades, a group of dropouts, ex-convicts and ex-junkies. The gang had taken part in several community events such as blood drives, voter registrations and the reclamation of old vacant lots as playgrounds for neighborhood children. At present they are renovating a twenty-five-unit apartment building at 251 East 119th Street. With U-HAB backing, they too were able to obtain a loan. U-HAB also helped to organize the Renegades' rather formidable project by forming a seven-member board of directors from the gang's members and a corporation to help run the job.

Lower-income families are clearly the ones in greatest need of renovated housing. Why, then, do other cities pass them by? "The conventional mortgage loans usually available are not accessible to us because the banks consider us highly irregular," said Terner of U-HAB. "They prefer 'safe customers.'" But then where does U-HAB get what little money it has? "The only federal money available to us now comes from the Federal Community Development Act. HUD grants are more for other programs." And, says Terner, "there's enough housing in New York City's abandoned stock of buildings to house the city of Boston."

U-HAB has been able to tap the city's Municipal Loan Program, but that source, what with New York's budget crisis, is rapidly drying up and U-HAB must seek other sources for homestead mortgages in the state and federal governments and the private sector. What has worked so far has been a combination of long-term loans, tax abatements, zero or nominal purchase prices for abandoned properties, cooperative ownership and, in some cases, job-training funds. That, plus some U-HAB seed money, free technical assistance and hard work by the future owners, makes urban homesteading in New York City appear to be a plausible alternative to the housing crisis that plagues many low-income families.

"There's no money left in New York City's program. I don't know what's going to happen now," says Terner. "There's no chance for HUD money with this adminis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tration. As always, the bureaucrats tackle the easy problems because they're afraid of failing at the hard problems." Another look at U-HAB in a few years will show whether or not it has weathered the government's apathy and shrinkage of funds. And another look in a few years may be too late.

In Boston, the Urban Homesteading program is still in the planning stages. It follows the route taken in Wilmington and Philadelphia, aiming for middle-income families that can afford to renovate two- or three-family houses. Under Boston's proposed program a new owner puts up 20 per cent (up to $2,000) of the renovation costs. The balance (up to $20,000), will then be advanced to the homesteader as a low-interest rehabilitation loan from the city's Community Development Block Grant.

Dorchester, with a population of 200,000, will be the first section of Boston to set up a homesteading program. According to Lewis Finfer of the Dorchester Community Action Council, HUD owns approximately 400 foreclosed buildings in the Dorchester-Mattapan area, the city of Boston owns between fifty and 100, and another 500 to 600 privately owned but vacant houses are in the process of tax foreclosures.

"We plan to use about seventy to eighty houses in three distinct areas in Dorchester: Meeting House Hill, Wellington Hill and Codman Square," says John Coggershell. "The houses that we are selecting for this program are really the only problems with the neighborhoods themselves. The houses are just eyesores to the community," he said. In that respect, Boston is following the Philadelphia program.

"The Boston program will allow homesteaders one year to bring their houses up to building code standards. If they can't do it in a year, they probably can't do it at all," says Frank Tate, director of the Office of Community Development. Tate worked as assistant director in the Philadelphia Homestead Program, which might explain why the two programs are so similar. "This program isn't going to be much of a giveaway," says Bob Rugo, another Dorchester city planner in the BRA; "otherwise people would try to rip off the system. For example, you're not going to find too many houses with $3,000 to $4,000 repair costs." The houses in Dorchester are mostly "triple deckers" or three-family houses. John Coggershell estimates the renovation costs of any of the buildings selected will run between $10,000 and $15,000.

According to HUD consultant Dr. Mary F. Berry, who outlined a model for successful urban homesteading in the January 1974 issue of HUD's publication *Challenge*, there are several important considerations:

> First, that no family should be established in a location alone. Homestead sites should be grouped so that mutual support could be developed.
>
> Second, that urban homesteading areas maintain a balance of mixed income families and people of mixed races and ethnic backgrounds.
>
> Third, that a demonstration team be selected to supervise and consult with the homesteaders and their families and if possible to be located in the area of homestead sites. The government should provide sufficient services such as garbage collection, police and fire protection, and other public services on a par with the most affluent areas of the city in order to buttress the efforts of the homesteaders.
>
> Fourth, that the physical rehabilitation expert of the demonstration team develop training materials and manuals, interview homesteaders prior to training and then train them in rehabilitation methods. Also, the rehab expert should buy the building materials in bulk and make the materials centrally located and easily available to those homesteaders who decide to do some of the work themselves, thus minimizing the costs to the homesteader.
>
> And fifth, that a system of incremental equity be set up whereby a homesteader could know beforehand how much his sweat equity is worth if he should change his mind and leave the homestead. The homesteader would then be able to sell his share of his sweat equity, thus returning market forces to the community.

Also in the HUD model were a list of priorities for selecting applicants in urban homesteading programs:

(*1*) Current occupants of units to be homesteaded, if they remain in their home.

(*2*) Families displaced or needing relocation as a result of governmental action.

(*3*) Families on public housing waiting lists.

(*4*) Families living in overcrowded conditions.

Some people consider the HUD guidelines unrealistic, too confining, impractical or have never considered them. John Coggershell and Bob Rugo of BRA said they had not seen the HUD guidelines. Coggershell admitted that he had never heard the term "incremental equity" and said, "If the homesteader moves before his three years are up he loses everything." And of the priorities of homestead applicants he said, "Actually, all of our priorities are still up in the air."

"Also," he added, "we have no intentions of buying materials in bulk for the homesteaders. It wouldn't be practical with just seventy or eighty houses."

Don Terner of U-HAB said, "We hardly stick to HUD guidelines. We help anybody who needs housing and is willing to homestead it with his own sweat."

Whether or not HUD guidelines are taken seriously, they are at least directed toward better housing for those who really need it. Most of the urban homesteading programs can hardly hope to make a dent in the housing crisis, even if they eventually expand. If the Boston, Philadelphia and Wilmington programs succeed, they will do so outside the most needy sector of the housing market, the inner city.

U-HAB may seem to be just another program for inner-city housing, but it's not. If urban homesteading ever seeks a model, it should look to U-HAB. It is no cure-all and makes no such claim. Changing one house or building won't change a neighborhood, let alone a whole inner city. The deterioration of the cities is a disease; bad housing is just a symptom. But, even within its limitations, if homesteading is to succeed it must follow U-HAB's example of attacking the housing crisis by working with the people whose needs are most critical. □

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS

Publishing the Backwoods Genius

GENE LYONS

The trouble, one hears with increasing frequency, is that nobody *reads* anymore. Not serious fiction, anyway, and certainly not good poetry. Even a very favorable review prominently placed in *The New York Times Book Review*, far and away the most important notice a book can get (most bookstores use it as a guide for ordering), will often fail to save a serious work from quick remaindering. And even that magazine, regardless of one's opinions of its editors and reviewers, cannot cover one quarter of the books published in a given week, and only a small fraction of those prominently enough to make much difference.

The real problem, writers themselves will tell you, is the publishing industry, with the emphasis upon "industry." Gone are the gentleman and lady editors of yore. In their place are corporate smoothies who flood the bookstores with cat horoscopes, treatises on curing acne through self-assertion and how-to manuals for persons who want to have sex with poltergeists or invertebrate animals. No wonder Literature is dying.

But is it? It is true that the sales of original works of fiction constitute a smaller percentage of hardback book sales every year, that most paying markets for short fiction have disappeared and that quality poetry usually loses money for its publishers. But most of us buy our fiction in paperback editions, and for perfectly understandable reasons. Why spend $10 on a cloth-bound novel that may have gotten respectfully mixed reviews when for $2 you can read a paperback Faulkner, Hemingway, Dostoyevsky, Dickens, Kafka, Woolf, Camus, Austen, Twain or anybody else whose complete works have passed you by? Or for that matter a paperback Bellow, Roth, Greene, Powell, Nabokov, Lessing, Grass or Malraux. And with a dozen or so exceptions, hardly any of them Americans and almost none since poetry became High Culture early in this century, real poets have never done anything but sell badly and lose money in the short run for their publishers.

Ordinarily generalizations so obvious as these would not need to be made. But the subject of this column is to be the "little magazines" and small presses, whose number is greater than all the barrooms in Jersey City and whose quality and points of view vary even more widely. On my desk as I write is a 1972 list of COSMEP (Council of Small Magazine Editors and Publishers) member publications with more than 350 entries, any number of which have no doubt ceased publication since then, having been replaced at least two to one by new ventures. Some like *Partisan Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *Shenandoah* or *The Hudson Review* have been around for quite a while and have relatively well-established reputations. One would think the number itself an encouraging sign of health in the current climate of pessimism regarding the literary arts.

Unfortunately many of those publications contribute to that pessimism by being dedicated at least implicitly to the conspiracy theory of literary eminence, that which holds that a novelist, say, like E.L. Doctorow, has grown recently rich and famous either because he hangs around the New York publishing great or because he has "sold out." Why right down the road in Boulder or Chapel Hill or Eugene is this guy who is better than Doctorow and Bellow combined, but he can't Make It in New York because . . . well usually because he isn't *commercial*. An energetic self-promoter named Richard Kostelanetz recently devoted an entire book called *The End of Intelligent Writing* to this theme, and in one of those nice literary ironies had it published by Sheed & Ward in New York and prominently (if not kindly) reviewed in all the major places. The funeral, should the incipient decline in the prestige of imaginative writing in American culture prove permanent, will be extraordinarily well publicized.

This is not to say that all in the literary world is as one would have it. Neither critical acclaim nor readers are distributed among writers in accordance with anybody's assessment of their achievements. There are many writers of considerable gifts who are all but unknown to the reading public. But the myth of the backwoods genius who will burst like a meteorite upon our bedazzled posterity is just that, a myth. If anything, one might successfully argue that the American publishing industry consumes the raw materials of literary talent so fast that our writers are damaged by premature notoriety before they can perish of neglect. Not that he is in any sense used up but one can get an excellent short course in the ironies of early success by reading the essays in Philip Roth's *Reading Myself and Others*, published last year. Because of the kind of intensified scrutiny that large public success can bring, almost everybody had already assumed a position on Roth's work, so that when *My Life As a Man* was published in what, after all, was only its author's 41st year it was generally taken as just another Roth, rather than as what I think it was: Roth's finest book, combining his gift for barbed aphorism with the compassion and the kind of gravity that had informed his 1963 novel *Letting Go*, and made it perhaps the best novel of what one might call "domestic realism" of the decade.

But time, if my opinion is correct and posterity is fair, will take care of that. And nobody, least of all the man himself I imagine, expects you to have much pity for an author who has gotten the readers and the attention that all writers want, but most only dream about. My point is this: although I shall be reading and reviewing as widely in the small magazines and literary presses as I am able, the reader would be ill-advised to expect vast and fundamental surprises. While it would very much suit the vanity of any critic to believe that he could expect fairly regularly to bring to the public eye great undiscovered talents, like so many Hollywood starlets in the corner drugstore, experience shows that it is very unlikely to happen. Show me a fiction writer typing away in a cold and lonely attic and I'll show you a writer who has either little talent and no discipline; or too much pride or too much masochism to take a couple of thousand dollars a month from a university in exchange for thirty twenty-hour weeks on campus

---

Gene Lyons, who will be contributing a monthly column to The Nation, *lives in Little Rock, Ark. He has written for* Harper's, The New York Review of Books, Texas Monthly *and other magazines.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

each year; or one or both of the above plus a recent and ugly divorce. Poets, of course, are something else again, but a poet who expects to make his living at it is a fool. The romantic figure of the Joycean artist forsaking all for his work has little application in contemporary America; nor, received opinion in some Creative Writing circles notwithstanding, has the legend of the marvelous creator of the beautiful who cannot find a major publisher because his or her work is insufficiently salable. Besides reading and reviewing a good many books in the last few years for the *Arkansas Gazette*, *Harper's Bookletter* and *The New York Times Book Review*, not to mention a number of little magazines, I have judged or read for a few literary prizes, the most noteworthy of which have been the National Endowment for the Arts Literary Grant Program and a literary fellowship sponsored by the Massachusetts Foundation for the Arts and Humanities. In all of that reading neither I nor any of my fellow judges, so far as I know, has ever encountered a single piece of imaginative writing that was neither in print nor about to be published that we thought should be. Needless to say there was a good deal in print about which the only remarkable thing was just that.

If my strictures seem unnecessarily harsh I offer as my only excuse the habit of hanging around universities where there are any number of souls, not all of them students, who imagine that books are commonly rejected by publishing houses because they are too good. It is not at all a coincidence, then, that to glance down a list of mailing addresses of small magazines and presses is like looking at an academic travel guide: Iowa City, Tucson, Madison, Bowling Green, Gainesville, Princeton, Stillwater, Davis, Santa Cruz. But I do not wish to be misleading. If it is virtually impossible for a writer of any gifts at all to fail of publication, it is equally true that promotion, distribution, sales and readers are much harder to come by. An author who brings his work out in one of the high quality small magazines or presses is looking for two things: careful editing and production values and readers who are more particular and more responsive than the great lowing herd. If he chooses well he can have both; if not he will get neither.

The reader should not imagine that because a large number of small magazines and presses are located in college communities and often affiliated with universities that they are necessarily academic in tone. As one who is convinced that the influence of the American English department upon our national letters is near to being disastrous, I have no personal interest in boosting the careers of pedants. The average Ph.D. in English is a specialist. Unless he is in "Contemporary American" he has about as much interest in living and practicing writers as he has in Roller Derby. If he reads literary magazines at all they are those with scholarly overtones, and he reads them for the same reason that adolescents listen to Top Forty radio stations: to find out what it is permissible to like. If there is an actual fiction writer or poet on the premises he is generally regarded as both unsound and presumptuous by the majority of his colleagues. I wish that anybody who thinks the foregoing a bit strong had been with me to hear the chairman of the English department of one of our largest and richest state universities say that most persons in his charge "would have no use for the kind of writing done by a George Orwell or an Edmund Wilson." Subsequent time spent there convinced me he was right.

Even so the university provides many writers a fine and private place to work, combining decent salaries with ample free time. In spite of their official tone most places manage to retain a good number of persons who actually love books and are willing to risk making judgments of their own. Anyone who has tried to do so can tell you how hard it is to locate persons outside of the academic environment who have the knowledge, the time and the inclination to do literary work at a rate that will allow a magazine to survive. Perhaps that is a shame, as Gore Vidal complains in his most recent essay in *New York Review*, but it is also a fact.

Enough of that. What I shall be trying to do in this space in future outings is to convey some sense of the breadth and the quality of work to be found in the literary magazines and independent small presses of America. Most of the time the best way to do that, it seems to me, will be to discuss the work of individual authors, even if it means speaking of material from several different sources at the same time. Nor do I think it would serve any useful purpose to confine myself strictly to writers

FOR THE MAN WHO DISCOVERED THE NEW MARKET CAVERNS

Now the caverns are wired
so the guide can flick on sections of wall
still damp from wearing centuries of river
like a skin. I half listen as he points
to stone organs, bridal chambers,
keeping my inner ear pressed
to the work of the water,
its patient unwinding through stone.

Going down, I try not to think
of the way you descended, your body's ride
through darkest lovers' tunnels.
Finally I kneel and stare down a hole
with no bottom, with not even a flashlight
to pick up the pulse of black water
on its slash downward, the gills
of blind fish bloated with eggs.
I press my ear to that current, listening
for a new way of breathing
you may have picked up by drowning,

something I can carry back
besides these chunks of stalactite
that take more than our lives
dripping into columns.

Even now I dream your mastering strokes
for all of us who walk out onto floors
we always assume will be there,
your waterlogged cells bucking the odds
at the bottom, taking in river,
gargling back bubbles of air.

Paula Rankin

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whose work appears *only* in such magazines. Next month, for example, I should like to introduce readers to a novel called *Going After Cacciato* by Tim O'Brien, sections of which have appeared to date in *Ploughshares, The Denver Quarterly, The Massachusetts Review, Shenandoah,* and, of all things, *Redbook*. In 1973 O'Brien's Vietnam war memoir *If I Die In a Combat Zone* got numerous favorable reviews. To my mind his first novel, *Northern Lights*, published last year by Seymour Lawrence/Delacorte deserved far more attention than it got. O'Brien is one of those very gifted writers I mentioned earlier who, although he has had two books published by an unquestionably major New York publisher (Delacorte is a subsidiary of Dell) is not at all well known to the general reading public. I shall also be discussing a novella and seven short stories called *Separate Flights* by Andre Dubus, published by David R. Godine of Boston, parts of which first came out in *Sage*, the *Northwest Review, North American Review*, and *The New Yorker*, which hardly qualifies. That, it seems to me, is as good a way of surveying the field, and a far more amusing way too, as entering at random every little drugstore on the prairie, just hoping that Lana Turner will be sitting there in a tight cashmere sweater, typing away. Of course if I'm in there on business and happen to run into her, I hope I'll know what I'm seeing and be able to tell you. □

Fiction & Religious Credibility

EARTHLY BREAD. *By Michael Mewshaw. Random House. 256 pp. $7.95.*

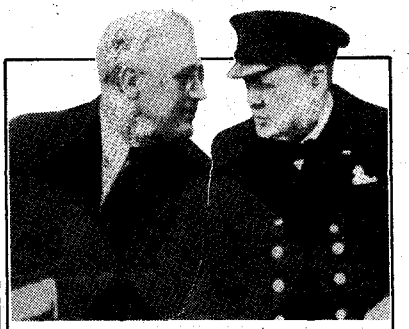
EUGENE CHESNICK

In a symposium held at Sweet Briar College Flannery O'Connor said about her work, "As a novelist, the major part of my task is to make everything, even an ultimate concern, as solid, as concrete, as specific as possible. The novelist begins his work where human knowledge begins—with the senses; he works through the limitations of matter, and unless he is writing fantasy, he has to stay within the concrete possibilities of his culture." It is good orthodox philosophy and good literary theory at once that all knowledge begins with sensation and that one's images must be firmly fixed in reality. A novel by Michael Mewshaw, *Earthly Bread*, demonstrates the continuing problem of trying to write fiction within the specific limits of one's culture.

Mewshaw will follow, if he can, in the tradition of Catholic comic novelists —O'Connor, J.F. Powers, Walker Percy. His situation is current in the highest degree. A Paulist priest, undergoing a crisis of belief of his own, gets caught up in an attempt to de-program a Jesus freak. The parents of the new convert ask him to accompany the de-programmer they have engaged so that he can provide the necessary "Catholic influence" since the mother is willing to declare herself still a believing Catholic, and the boy was raised in Catholic schools. The priest, Father Amico, increasingly wonders just what the phrase "Catholic influence" might mean under the circumstances. Mewshaw has chosen as matter for his fiction something dangerously off the top in terms of contemporary controversy. Perhaps it is not wise to expect much genuine spiritual meaning to be derived from the fuss over standard culture versus counterculture.

Mewshaw seems on firm ground in his choice of a priest who is speculating whether the faith that is so dear to him is disappearing. Father Amico thinks to himself, "At best, I could conceive of myself as a keeper, not a defender, of the faith—a caretaker, someone who stood around patiently like those men in museums watching over dusty antiques and bones." Saying Mass in Rome where he was sent to recover from his nervous breakdown, he finds himself stared at by tourists on holiday —a predictable occurrence in a world filled more with adepts at enjoying than believing. One recalls Graham Greene's whiskey priest being tracked down by the police from the new revolutionary state who are determined to eliminate the one last priest, and O'Connor's own Hazel Motes who, when told that people no longer torture themselves for their sins by placing barbed wire around their chests and glass in their shoes, as he insists upon doing, announces, "They ain't quit doing it as long as I'm doing it." Catholic novelists usually have been at their best when most hard-pressed, a maximum amount of ingenuity being summoned forth. Religious credibility and imagination are stretched at the same time.

Eugene Chesnick teaches literature at Temple University. He is at work on a novel based on the life of Charles Willson Peale, parts of which appeared in Prose *and* Michigan Quarterly.



A gripping narrative of the unique partnership that saved the West

ROOSEVELT AND CHURCHILL 1939-1941

by Joseph P. Lash

AUTHOR OF *ELEANOR AND FRANKLIN*

"A splendid work—incisive in its analysis, compelling in its narrative, sensitive in its judgments. It is quite worthy of its protagonists—and what more can one possibly say?"
—ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

Illustrated with photographs. $12.95

"Mothers of sons, mothers of daughters (they are not the same), daughters and sons, as well as fathers, will never see themselves the same way again after reading this book."*

OF WOMAN BORN

Motherhood as Experience and Institution

by Adrienne Rich

"This is an insight-generating book which shows—not tells—us what the love-hate relationship we call motherhood really is.... A powerful book. I could hardly put it down."—*JESSIE BERNARD, U.S. Civil Rights Commission $8.95

AT ALL BOOKSTORES

Norton

W. W. NORTON & COMPANY, INC.
500 Fifth Avenue, New York 10036

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The problem of belief, Mewshaw's intuition appears to tell him, may well have to do with the impact on our senses of the world as we have built it for ourselves. Father Amico complains when he catches himself in a moment of emptiness, "I discovered myself concentrating on the Musak, that ubiquitous aural intrusion, the wallpaper of music. Once back in America, my eyes and ears gorged omnivorously on all manner of insipidness, while my mind tried to avoid more troublesome matters." Starting with a New York City subway ride, with its obvious associations to a trip through hell, then a plane flight and encounters with conventioneers on that occasion, and finally settling in Austin, Texas, the site of most of the novel, everything that is seen works a hardship on our higher aspirations. Even in the greater open spaces of the West it is our electronics that supplies the images: "What little was left of the vegetation reminded me of the guts of a computer—all loose, waving wires and barbed transistors." And the rest is a long line of motels, bars and junk food stands. The priest furnishes his room out of stuff acquired with savings stamps from the Redemption Center. Who can believe anything with all this around? At this point the novel comes closest perhaps to some kind of realization.

The writer of *Earthly Bread* has unmistakable designs for his book. When Mewshaw wants to convey the idea that it is still possible to sense the influence of God in the world, he decides, suitably enough, to have the priest revealed as a priest despite his being dressed in layman's clothes and displaying no other visible signs of his vocation. The result, though, is not so effective. A doorman takes it into his head to confess his sins to him in an elevator after years of not making a confession in church. "In that time I been using rubbers two, three times a week. Add it up and that's a lot of mortal sins. But we got five kids, Fadder, and I can't afford any more." When the priest tells him that a church is the place for such scenes, the man replies he works nights and sleeps days. The novel's scene is neither funny nor deep.

Symbolism has traditionally been a part of religious art. In *Earthly Bread*, however, symbolic figures are almost always used for purposes of satire and parody. In Austin, University of Texas football is number one, and everywhere Father Amico goes he encounters the upraised index and little finger, signifying "hook 'em, horns." Even at the University Hillel House the menorah "seemed to have lost its middle fingers. But, no, that was the ubiquitous Longhorns symbol." What is glimpsed as a crucifix sitting in the back of a pickup truck turns out on closer look to be a tire iron. Mewshaw, like many of his contemporaries, is determined to use the dreck of our culture as part of his novel. The problem in all cases is that it may take an especially fine imagination to keep one's novel from becoming part of the dreck. In Mewshaw's instance, the task might be to transform the symbolism one step beyond a mere satire on how we live our lives to a point of religious affirmation so that it is the signs of an omnipresent God that appear to be ubiquitous.

Much of the early conversation in the novel takes place at the rectory to which Father Amico has been newly assigned. The talk is slightly reminiscent of the stories of J.F. Powers in displaying priests in their routine activities and ordinary human vulnerabilities. But there is a difference: Powers's clergy accepted the rules—the young priest would test the old pastor's temperament but he would never challenge his authority. Now the younger generation of priests argues with the older on matters of principle such as the validity of the Jesus movement, and Mewshaw appreciates the new liberalism. Powers's own impulse in his last volume of stories, *Look How the Fish Live*, has been to mock the new priests. They may fight for tolerance but they may just as easily take off in a convertible with a woman. Walker Percy in *Love in the Ruins* included among his characters an ex-priest, who is said to look just like Pat O'Brien, married to an ex-nun and both of them working as researchers in an experimental sex lab. Interestingly enough, the new trends within the Church have produced a strong reaction from some of the best Catholic novelists.

Once the action moves to a motel room where the de-programmer has taken the Jesus freak, whom he has more or less kidnapped, the novel settles into a series of debates over science and religion and rationality and irrationality. The priest is plainly on the side of the boy, who has taken the new name Tiagatha, and against the de-programmer, Meadlow. Meadlow is pure villain. One of the difficulties of the novel is Mewshaw's inability to separate himself substantially from the counter-culture so as to entertain the notion that de-programming may, in fact, be an accurate, if brutal term—a recognition of a kindred system in its contempt for free will. The religious spirit, one Thaddeus, whose apostle Tiagatha has become, is not around so that although we are provided a grim picture of Meadlow's methods we never see the other's influence at work.

What begs to be considered is that the Jesus revival is at bottom more a rebellion against a set of middle-class values than a closely specified religious creed. Sure enough, the interview with Tiagatha's parents takes place in their expensive suburban home. To say that Christianity has always been in revolt against materialism hardly effects the distinction. If the boy had joined the Hare Krishna movement, it is difficult to see that it would have made any difference to the narrative outcome of the book. Someone with a real stake in living a spiritual life might well find himself caught between the mutually treacherous forces of pseudo-belief and nonbelief. The horns of such a dilemma would be hard to escape between, nonetheless so in "hook 'em horns" country.

The impression throughout the novel is that Father Amico is being hounded by God. In the end he is finally able to bring himself to pray.

> I paused at Tiagatha's room, but heard nothing and didn't speak. In my own room the lone sound was the murmur of the air conditioner, as ceaseless in the performance of its duty as those Carmelite nuns who pray night and day so that every moment all over the world there will be devotion to God.
>
> Once I had undressed and switched off the lamp, I dropped to my knees and added my solitary voice to the world-wide whisper.

What the priest prays over and over again is one word, "Jesus." The scene has its intensity of feeling with the idea of a single prayer being added to the "world-wide whisper," but what kind of irony is intended in connecting the prayers with that great comfort maker, the air conditioner? The boy is eventually freed from his imprisonment when the priest breaks open the locked door of the motel room using the very tire iron that was first seen as a crucifix. Meadlow is disposed of in a broadly farcical scene when he is crushed to death by the fat lady who, with her husband, owns the motel. Father Amico administers the last rites, convinced that the man was a baptized Catholic.

I, for one, find it impossible to think for long about this Jesus freak business without returning again to Flannery O'Connor as a measure of worth and remembering her wisecrack on another occasion: "Whenever I'm asked why

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Southern writers particularly have a penchant for writing about freaks, I say it is because we are still able to recognize one." A grotesque for her is someone without God; the characters in her stories she renders as deformed, twisting and jerking about in the motions of their bodies and their souls. They are wretchedly unhappy. Her modern landscapes frequently suggest an emptiness of belief rather than the fullness of creation. Her methods seem so up to date now because it has been precisely the same techniques that other writers have seized upon for the sake of their various nihilisms, the difference being that for her there still exists the real possibility of God's redemptive grace. Against this background of considerable agony and sense of loss, Jesus freaks can only seem faddish and self-conscious in their preoccupations.

Religious sensibilities differ to a huge extent, of course, but I can easily understand that, for some, the present religious enthusiasm might be a little hard on the soul. People profess their faith on their bumper stickers: "Honk if you believe in Jesus"; "I found it." This may be religious meaning writ a little too large, a menace to faith greater than *The Origin of Species* could ever have been imagined to be. In recent decades religion has been both on the verge of dying out and being advertised all over the place. There is no telling what the outcome of the now popular exclamations of faith and the founding of cults will be; but, if huckstering can only result in betrayal, then one guess is that what will emerge is an atheism harder and more cynical than anything ever experienced before. The nonbeliever is protected from worry over such an outcome since for him it is only the final playing out of a vacillation that has been a part of the history of religion from the beginning; the believer is in a much more painful position. If another reversal does take place, then Mewshaw and novelists of a similar inclination, as others before them, will have to strive for whatever achievements they can manage, as far as their individual religious instincts and literary talents will take them. □

The World Rendered, the World Restored

SADNESS AND HAPPINESS: Poems. *By Robert Pinsky. Princeton University Press. 74 pp. Paper $2.95.*

ALL ROADS AT ONCE. *By Alfred Corn. The Viking Press. 85 pp. $5.95.*

J. D. McCLATCHY

In a letter to his brother, Keats once claimed that "there are two distinct tempers of mind in which we judge of things—the worldly, theatrical and pantomimical; and the unearthly, spiritual and ethereal." Perhaps such a perspective is merely characteristic of Keats, but it serves as a convenient distinction when considering these two recent first books of poems. The older adjectives are admittedly rather forced, and for them I would substitute other terms to allow the same contrast. Among our younger poets, there have emerged decided preferences for either one of two sorts of poetry, two ways of articulating their experience of words and the world. I would call them the dramatic and the meditative. The dramatic depends on a sequential *staging* of events and their epiphanies, while the meditative layers its pensive textures on the premise that events only exist in and continually modify their interrelations. The action of the former—the action of the poem, and of the poem on its reader—tends to be expressive and gestural, broad and forceful; that of the latter, more architectural and impacted, subtle and elusive, mannering rather than managing its materials. Where the one seeks to expose its subjects and their objectives, often in a language impatient with its own necessary mediations, the other tends to reveal the intentions the world has upon the poem, usually in a reflexive voice that discovers the meanings implicit in its own associative, centripetal diction and patterns. Dramatic poetry is drawn out to the lengths necessary to accommodate the experience it seeks to embody. Meditative poetry draws into itself a world appropriated by the very process of its re-imagining. The world rendered. The world restored.

Let me illustrate the point, even though my examples are uneven. Robert Pinsky's book—with its stark title, at once embracing and reductive—is an engaging one: its voice is open to complaint or acclaim, its strategies are straightforward, its intelligence and sympathies are poised, its topics notably "normal"—the way we live now, fraying into the future: our eyes lowered, our jaws squared, our minds wary, our hearts exhausted. As a poet he is most successful where he is most generous—though not with the length of his attention. His extended poems on the game of tennis and the profession of psychiatry are catalogues for easy conclusions: tennis is like life, psychiatrists are like us. His other poems, while occasionally as discursive, are more tentative and probing, but they too prefer exaggerated gestures, which he grounds in drab remembered places or contemporary circumstantial scenes:

The jaunty crop-haired graying
Women in grocery stores,
Their clothes boyish and neat,
New mittens or new sneakers,

Clean hands, hips not bad still,
Buying ice cream, steaks, soda,
Fresh melons and soap—or the big
Balding young men in work shoes

And green work pants, beer belly
And white T-shirt, the porky walk
Back to the truck, polite.

But like a suburban Rilke, Pinsky is impatient to discover how

Against weather, and the random
Harpies—mood, circumstance, the laws
Of biography, chance, physics—
The unseasonable soul holds forth

As if the actions of this world were mere pretense, Pinsky bullies his subjects until they yield the vague comfort of a moral. It is an indication of his distrust of his own dramatic method, which seeks to imitate the world—to *mime* in art's foreign accents—only to realize he has duplicated rather than transfigured what he longs to change:

art and life
both inconstant mothers, in whose
fixed cold bosoms we lie fixed,

desperate to devise anything, any
sadness or happiness, only
to escape the clasped coffinworm
truth of eternal art or marmoreal

infinite nature.

His concern for the contours of experience imposes on him the "tyranny of the world visible," which he at once indulges and resents, and so finally submits to, submits us to. But his admirable, if strenuous, intellectual persistence rarely succeeds in clarifying or refining his dramatic material into poetic vision—as, say, the early work of James Wright did with such natural conviction. Pinsky speaks in a large, outspoken voice, anx-

J. D. McClatchy teaches creative writing and contemporary poetry at Yale University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ious to proclaim formulas of and for our condition, which he details with trenchant precision. The only problem with his poems—and it is the primary risk of such dramatic poetry generally—is that they more often assume rather than earn the lessons they draw us toward.

Given the monochrome of his material and the flat earnestness of his tone—and we must grant any writer his given—Pinsky is still capable of exciting moments: acts of attention within any one poem's dramatic appeal. But they are moments isolated from one another and from any cumulative force the book may have had apart from its author's engaged and engaging personality. That personality is more immediate and profiled than Alfred Corn's, whose work is what Keats called his alternative: "ethereal." That is, oddly, almost the keynote in James Merrill's jacket-blurb for *All Roads At Once*: "Airy, all-seeing, a new window onto the world—this is an extremely beautiful first book. Among Mr. Corn's contemporaries I know of no poet more accomplished." That high praise is entirely deserved, and its source is apposite if one were to cite the influences on this book: clearly Merrill's urbane angle of vision is one, along with John Ashbery's intelligent insouciance, and Elizabeth Bishop's eye for the charged detail. None of these very different poets is Corn's model, though aspects of his art might remind a reader of any one of them. His manner and matter are entirely his own, and in more than the question of technique he has refused to narrow his poetic choices, so that his book has a variety and weight that are not only promising but already assured.

Corn's maturity is immediately apparent in his ability to attend to the things of this world, and he conjugates them with a verbal felicity and subtlety rare among his contemporaries, who often lack the patience to see a subject through or an object thoroughly. His poems closely scan the shades and surfaces of their environments—whether white everlastings on the Oregon coast or oil slicks on a Soho street, a case of Chinese porcelains or a Fairfield Porter print. Yet neither the transient natural detail nor art's ambivalent permanence is his real concern. Instead, they function as the composition of place for his meditations, since "nothing really appears unless we try/ to see it as something else"—"The world is made in our own images." To compare is more than to conjure; it is to restore the world to our ideas of it, which, for Corn, are the true *matière première*. He is, at times, suspicious of thought, "the frozen/ Lace that screens us from the major drawbacks/ Of the enterprise." And his meditations are occasionally skittish, as if to respect the essential obscurity of purpose and consequence in this life:

The sequels to our least
Acts escape us. Work makes the artist, then
goes on to occupy unpredictable
spaces in a relay-dance, a grand right
and left, moment changing hands but standing
still as people, rooms get the touch and glide
past on altered tracks, in phase with a moon
otherwise expired. And may come back to that
first night, now felt through day moved toward darkness.

Still, his poems are contingency plans to counter the hazards of overdetermined or undermining circumstance, and he sets out—on all roads at once, but in the footsteps of Wallace Stevens and Hart Crane—to discover or devise "eternity/ on a human scale," in the instant or the instance.

Life, then, can often be a "sentence" for the artist, and his task is to parse its punishments. The "frames" he uses to do so—a word he puns on several times in these poems—seem simultaneously the perspectives of the artistic sensibility and conspiracies against the rush of experience it seeks to control and interpret. Do our myths evade or evince? What Corn calls the "proofs of the past" are less evidence of sense made than prologue to our continuing necessity to revise the terms on which we take the world. A typical Corn poem is a measured *aria parlante*, domestic or solitary, working its way word-over-word toward what is implicit in experience—his, ours, the poem's. Here is a new poet—one is tempted to add "at last!"—with faith in the expressive and imaginative resources of his craft, and to read such poems as "Interim in a Waiting Room," "Images for Piano," or "Pages from a Voyage" allows us his convictions. It is apparent, too, that Corn has read other books than the one he has written, and he risks invoking the visionary company to which he clearly belongs; his moving poem on Hart Crane, "The Bridge, Palm Sunday, 1973," asks help for his ambition and project from that voyager. It is a touching gesture, and bids to bridge our strongest American line of poetry into the new generation. But Alfred Corn is also on his own, and the pleasure his characteristic work gives is itself a moving experience—no less moving than the realization that many of these poems have a stature that encourages comparison with artists already acknowledged as our best. But the last word should be his. Not by chance do I choose from a poem titled "Accident," which ends with his premise and his promise, in words finally spoken to us all:

Experience falls forward into words; falls short
Of an answer; though everything is well perceived.

If there is any comfort here, it belongs to you. □

MUSIC

DAVID HAMILTON

"Mahler has become a brand article," observes Wolf Rosenberg in *Gustav Mahler in Vienna*, one of two new coffee table books* that by their very existence confirm his assertion. Not without occasional value in terms of content, these compendia are so packaged as to constitute the upper-class equivalent of the Mahler T-shirt: status badges, decorative assertions of membership in a cult that can hardly any longer be considered a cult, since it has reached a size sufficient to support such enterprises.

Like many such books, these are not intended primarily to be read. The designer of the Wiesmann collection has taken particular note of this assumption, setting the text in a large and clumsy format to aerate the pages between his pictures. Nor, apparently, does he hold much brief for the information that might be conveyed by pictures; many of them are reproduced with deliberate graininess, and the facsimiles of Mahler's musical manuscripts are either too small to decipher or cropped into fragments for decorative purposes.

The literary side of this collective opus has not been well cared for either, the various essays overlapping one another and retreading the same ground: Henry-Louis de La Grange, under the rubric "Gustav Mahler's Private Life in Vienna," tells us a good deal about Mahler as opera director—and just as well, for Marcel Prawy's essay on that topic is frequently unreliable. (On p. 83 alone, Prawy gives Mahler credit for presenting Leoncavallo's *Bohème*, though

* *Gustav Mahler in Vienna.* Edited by Sigrid Wiesmann. Rizzoli International Publications. 192 pp. $25. *Mahler: A Documentary Study.* Edited by Kurt Blaukopf. Oxford University Press. 280 pp. $29.95 until December 31; thereafter $37.50.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this was merely the grudging fulfillment of a commitment by the previous director; describes the Vienna première of Strauss's *Feuersnot* as "successful" when in fact Mahler had to withdraw the work after three performances; and fails to tell us that Anna von Mildenburg was something more intimate than an apt protégée of the conductor before she came to Vienna.) Only a single essay treats the music, one by Pierre Boulez that is better read in the more meticulously edited translation published recently in *The New York Review of Books* ("Mahler Now," October 28), at once perceptive and elliptical. There is no index, and no sources are given for quotations or other material.

The text of Blaukopf's book, on the other hand, consists almost entirely of sources, and it is properly indexed. The term "Documentary Study" should not mislead one into expecting the comprehensiveness or thorough annotation that characterized the late Otto Erich Deutsch's documentary biographies of Handel and Schubert, but the sequence of material is reasonably coherent, the characters are identified, and marginal references to the pictures suggest that some care was taken to make the whole package coherent. One could have wished for more facsimiles of Mahler scores, and less trash like a Hamburg-America Line prospectus or an unreadable map of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And if the pictures had not been deemed of such overriding importance, a happier format for the documents than the small-type, double-column layout might have been found. (Connoisseurs of color reproduction are referred to the portrait of Selma Kurz by John Quincy Adams—presumably a relative?—displayed in both books and almost unrecognizably different; characteristically, the Wiesmann book doesn't identify the artist.)

Here and there, the documents touch on Mahler's activity as composer—his own statements, testimony of friends and family, a few perceptive criticisms (e.g., Alfredo Casella's 1910 article). But Mahler the conductor, Mahler the opera director is the overwhelming presence, because that was the way he made noise in the world of his time, the way he left the most visible evidence. Even in La Grange's painstaking biography (the first volume of which was published by Doubleday in 1973), this tends to happen; one longs for a separate and comprehensive study of Mahler's public activities, so that biographers would not feel compelled to clutter up studies of the composer with cast lists, reviews,

NEW DIRECTIONS

MARTIN BAX

The Hospital Ship. ". . . an engagingly quirky first novel. It's a concerned, scholarly, funny, tangential piece of present/future fantasy." *(New Statesman).* Cloth, $7.95; NDP402, $3.95

FREDERICK BUSCH

Domestic Particulars. A family chronicle in 13 interrelated episodes. "...haunting, unsettling and effective" *(Publishers Weekly).* $11.95; NDP413, $3.95

LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

Who Are We Now? 31 new poems capped by the extraordinary "Populist Manifesto." $6.50; NDP425, $1.95

TOBY OLSON

The Life of Jesus. A first novel. "It reads like poetry, but isn't a poem; uses narrative and autobiographical techniques, but is neither a novel nor autobiography. A myth of initiation then—intimate, truly touching, original" *(Kirkus Reviews).* $8.50; NDP417, $3.95

OCTAVIO PAZ

Eagle or Sun? A landmark book of short prose poetry in a new, definitive translation by Eliot Weinberger. Bilingual. $8.50; NDP422, $2.95

EZRA POUND

The Collected Early Poems. Texts of Pound's books through 1912 and material from various publications and Yale Archive manuscripts. Ed., Michael King; Intro., Louis L. Martz. Illus., notes, indexes. $22.50

KENNETH REXROTH

100 More Poems from the Japanese. Delicate, masterly renderings of classical, medieval and modern texts. Calligraphy. $8.25; NDP420, $2.95

LINDA WAGNER

Interviews with William Carlos Williams: "Speaking Straight Ahead." ". . . the most convenient short course available in Williams's unaffected ideas about art and life" *(Kirkus Reviews).* $8.50; NDP421, $2.95

Please request complete catalog

NEW DIRECTIONS 333 SIXTH AVE. N.Y. N.Y. 10014

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

backstage intrigues, explications of the Imperial and Royal Court hierarchies, and so on.

Not that it isn't a fascinating subject: Mahler's ten years at the Vienna Opera were of enormous significance for the subsequent history of operatic production. In these books, of course, the visual aspect—Alfred Roller's scenography—manages to overwhelm the musical innovations; this, too, should be separately and thoroughly documented, for its train of influence, from Urban's Met *Tristan* of the 1920s through Berman's Met *Don Giovanni* of the 1950s, has been enormous.

But for Mahler as composer we must look elsewhere—to the music, of course. Coincidentally, to fill the hiatus preceding the availability of its new auditorium, the New York Philharmonic put together a Mahler Festival at Carnegie Hall, offering the rare opportunity to hear all nine symphonies by the same orchestra in the same hall—albeit under three different conductors (Erich Leinsdorf for No. 5, Boulez for Nos. 3, 7 and 9, James Levine for the rest). Despite the pressures of time, with consequent underrehearsed loose ends here and there, this was an invigorating experience. Levine's combination of craftsmanship, rhythmic steadiness, and brio, his appreciation of Mahler's coloristic and harmonic fantasy, were always apposite, and Boulez, after a stodgy No. 7 and a sloppy No. 9 (far less eloquent than his performances last year on the orchestra's European tour), put together a really splendid No. 3, with mezzo Yvonne Minton uncannily matching the instrumental timbres, and the orchestra —no doubt stimulated by the recent opening of its fine new auditorium—offering unwonted virtuosity. (I didn't hear the Leinsdorf No. 5, but the whole series of nine symphonies, in the order of composition, will be broadcast in the Philharmonic's radio series during December and January.)

Recordings of Mahler continue, and I've tried to catch up with some of them during this period. Neither the Stokowski (RCA Red Seal ARL2 0852) or Mehta (London CSA 2242) recordings of the 2nd tells us much more about Mahler than about the conductors' respective idiosyncracies—I'm still most impressed by Klemperer (Angel 3634), whose idiosyncracies precisely suit the piece. Levine has recorded the 4th with the Chicago Symphony (RCA Red Seal ARL1 0895), an astounding achievement in realizing the improvisatory character of Mahler's polyphony. The Philharmonic performance came remarkably close, all things considered, but don't miss this recording. A Levine 3rd from Chicago is imminent, and his 1st with the London Symphony is also desirable (RCA Red Seal ARL1 0894). Something of a disappointment, though, is a new *Lied von der Erde* conducted by Bernard Haitink (Philips 6500 831) —well played and carefully conducted, but sung stodgily by James King and with surprising insecurity by the usually admirable Janet Baker. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

It was smart of Nicholas Meyer, author of *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (E.P. Dutton/Ballantine Books), to realize that if anyone was to cure Sherlock Holmes of his alarming addiction to cocaine it would be Sigmund Freud. Having made that connection, it was elementary, so to speak, to arrange that Dr. Watson should read in the *Lancet* an article on the subject by the young Viennese doctor and should contrive to get his old and revered friend to Freud's consulting room. (This, I believe, is the one time on record when Watson outwitted Holmes, but then he had help from Mycroft, Sherlock's brighter brother.)

Well, it was not quite that easy. Meyer, if he were to add a successful "adventure" to the Holmes canon, had first to master Conan Doyle's somewhat pedagogic style and upper-class social attitudes. The mannerisms are broad and have frequently been aped to comic effect; as the pseudo-Watson, Meyer writes a fine military prose. But Meyer had in mind more than travesty; he set himself to invent a plot worthy of the master, and has had the ingenuity to bring off, if not a *Sign of the Four*, at least a story equal to one of the workaday chases. Further, it is precisely a Conan Doyle sort of story—the combination of meticulous logic and wild implausibility, a kind of Euclidian wonderland, that has preserved Watson's memoirs of Baker Street from generation to generation, like a flamboyant bouquet under glass. It must be admitted that the unmasking of the formidable, indestructible and mysterious Professor Moriarty touches an aspect of the Holmes family history that Watson would not have felt himself entitled to divulge, nor would he have introduced his chaste readers to a haunt of Viennese aristocratic debauchery. And he confronts Freud with an episode of rabid anti-Semitism that is saved only by the wit of its dénouement from being too genuinely ugly to be admitted into Conan Doyle's world of macabre entertainment. Meyer's Watson has been home from India for a very long time. But the scene in which a team of Lippizaner horses very nearly dispatches the three heroes would have made Conan Doyle beam. Also it films well.

Because inevitably—at least I thought it inevitable when I read the book and I suspect Meyer thought the same when he wrote it—*The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* has come to the screen, with Herbert Ross directing and Nicol Williamson, Robert Duvall and Alan Arkin playing, respectively, Holmes, Watson and Freud. In lesser roles are Laurence Olivier (Moriarty) and Vanessa Redgrave (Lola Deveraux). She is saved by the three friends from a fate more protracted than most deaths after a train race across Eastern Europe that recalls, perhaps intentionally, Buster Keaton's *The General* and with rolling stock, at least at the start, as elegant as that displayed in the recent *Murder on the Orient Express.*

Williamson and Duvall are precisely "right" in their celebrated roles, with the proviso that Williamson's Holmes is significantly more neurotic than was Conan Doyle's—as indeed he must be in a scheme that embraces the nascent ideas of Sigmund Freud. Of the three, however, Arkin's characterization is the most absorbing and most entertaining—for the paradoxical reason that the real young man he plays is far less well known to the public than are the two storybook figures portrayed by his colleagues. He has more freedom, thus, to imagine how readily a man of Freud's training and interests might grasp and apply Holmes's deductive methods, how he might see in the lamentably addicted, deeply misogynist, implacable foe of all miscreants a heaven-sent opportunity to put to the test his growing conviction that the seat of our woes is to be found in the subconscious.

NEAR THE MOUNTAINS

Near the mountains
footsteps on the ground
sound hollow

reminding you
Earth is a drum.

We must watch our steps closely
to play the right tune.

Joseph Bruchac

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Finally, the spectacle of Holmes and Freud riding full tilt at each other on the backs of their respective "methods" is as witty a bit of parody as one may hope to encounter in a work of "mere" entertainment. *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* is sophisticated tomfoolery, a commodity always in short supply. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

I had hoped to devote most of my column this week to Heinrich von Kleist's great play *The Prince of Homburg* (Chelsea Theatre Center at the Brooklyn Academy of Music) but a postponement of the critics' matinée necessitates my deferring discussion of the event till next week. The fact that a play of such distinction should be presented on one of the "little" stages rather than on our theatre's main thoroughfare causes me once again to note that the plays I have recently preferred have nearly all been modest ones off Broadway.

I somehow missed the opening last March of Jack Heifner's *Vanities* at the Chelsea Theatre: 407 W. 43rd Street. Perhaps I supposed it to be a mini-musical. But I have now seen and liked it.

It begins cutely with three girl cheerleaders practicing their idiot skills in a high school gymnasium in 1963. They are silly goslings whose team ecstasies, both breathless and vociferous are, in any case, funny. We next see them in a sorority house in 1968 still lightheaded and collegiately committed to their "ideals." They scorn the flower children and the hippies of the period. Still a vague uneasiness may be detected in their cackle. While Joanne, the virgin, looks resolutely forward to marriage and children, Mary, less scrupulously, hankers for free-lance romance in Rome, and Kathy, though apparently destined to enter the teaching profession, does not seem particularly eager about it.

In the third scene in a dapper garden apartment in which Kathy lives in 1974, the girls come together again at her invitation. On their arrival, they greet one another with the maidenly shrieks of their featherbrained past. Gradually we learn that Kathy has given up teaching—it bored her—and is now a not particularly pleased mistress of a male cipher who pays the rent for her living quarters. Mary gainfully runs a gallery for the sale of expensive pornographic artifacts—such as huge glass phalluses. She is cynically boastful, frozen in a track of sundry sex bouts. Joanne, true to her unswerving character, is proud and content in a marriage plentiful in progeny. For this Mary taunts her and finds herself unequivocally resented by her steadfast friend. Kathy appears permanently appalled by what has happened and not happened to all of them. The play ends with Kathy fixed in benumbed wonderment at an emptiness of meaning which reaches beyond their little circle.

The play is on the whole tartly humorous and by no means weighty. It is something like Dorothy Parker's *Big Blonde* without its bitter stress. There is in it a pinch of truth which pleases in the midst of so much meritriciousness in the Broadway bang. Best of all, giving it a quality more penetrating than the script, is the excellence of the cast and the acuity of Garland Wright's direction.

As Joanne, Kathy Bates, initially placid in demeanor, looks much less bright than her companions, and plays with exemplary relaxation. The constant flow of feeling and thought in her characterization marks her as a remarkably fine actress. Watching her affords a pleasure which many more conspicuously striking performances fail to do. Susan Merson and Jane Galloway are also very good. Their eyes are especially expressive. Both *stare* hauntingly: Ms. Merson as Mary as if she were gazing into the pit of a private hell intent on a damnation with a look which bespeaks both pleasure and fear; Ms. Galloway, strangely sexy (without the blonde wig) stares as if she were transfixed by a blank wall which remains bafflingly impenetrable. I will remember the play through its performances.

Also slight, yet honestly observant and intelligent is A.R. Gurney's *Children*, based on a story by John Cheever (Manhattan Theatre Club: 321 E. 73rd Street).

At a summer house on an island off the New England coast, during a July weekend in 1970, we meet a straight-backed Mother and her children: her daughter Barbara, herself a mother, her son Randy, her daughter-in-law Jane, also a mother. Another son, Pokey, his wife and children are frequently mentioned but only Pokey is hazily visible and silent behind a screen door. None of them has a "right" to be dissatisfied, yet none is happy. They are well-off, properly Anglo-Saxon, welded to a background without life-enhancing vents. Mother married a man she did not love to whom she remained everlastingly faithful. Three years after her husband's suicide by drowning she proposes to marry the children's uncle. She tells the children she will leave them the summer house, if they can pay for it, and set out with their uncle to seek well-being elsewhere.

Barbara is having an affair with the family's former gardener, now in real estate, and announces her wish to marry him, which in view of his low breeding is ridiculously shocking to all. Randy, who teaches physical education, is an uncomplicated though occasionally raging bonehead with a passion for sports. His wife Jane is rather depressed by her

"A blow at the solar plexus."
—William F. Buckley

The Nobel Prize-winning author's famous speeches delivered to the U.S. Congress and the AFL-CIO conventions, and the two BBC broadcasts that shocked London in March, 1976.

"The message...is that the West is in a terrible plight...morally weak, and could be crushed in a moment."
—BERNARD LEVIN, *The London Times*

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

WARNING TO THE WEST

Cloth $7.95, paper $2.95;
now at your bookstore
FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX

PLATIGNUM ITALIC SET

Contains a fountain pen, five Italic nibs, and instruction manual, all for only $5.50... At art material & pen shops, college book stores...or send check to Pentalic Corp., 132 West 22 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011 Add 50 cents for handling.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

husband's bootless preoccupations and the staleness of the general atmosphere but she is kept from any effective rebelliousness by her husband's bodily appeal and their household security. Pokey, detached from his siblings, is the irreconcilable one, distrustful of his mother and the conventions of "WASP" respectability. He has married out of line to a Jewish woman—a Ph.D. no less—and his children are permissively brought up so that they dress sloppily and use four-letter profanities, privileges not granted to any of the other children of the family. There is a passing outbreak of violence. Mother finally decides not to marry and not to abandon the house; in short, to stay put on the customary ground of her past, imbedded in it like a stone.

Gurney knows these people. He treats them with tongue-in-cheek asperity and humor. For the most part, the play amuses. We believe what we see. The underlying "statement," so muted it may easily be overlooked, is that the lives of the people we meet in the play, by no means a minority, exist in a state of unillumined stasis, hanging, seemingly untroubled, in the air with occasional jerks of fretfulness.

Here too the production, nicely directed by Melvin Bernhardt, profits by an excellent company of actors: Swoosie Kurtz as Jane, Holland Taylor as Barbara, Dennis Howard as Randy, and in the most difficult role (Mother) Nancy Marchand.

I should have liked to evade comment on *Poor Murderer* by the Czech playwright and poet Pavel Kohout, but since it is clearly a play of earnest intention in which some of my colleagues in the press have discerned special merit I feel constrained to say something about it (Ethel Barrymore Theatre).

It takes place in the hall of an institute for nervous disorders in the St. Petersburg of 1900. Kerzhentsev, educated in medicine, now an acclaimed actor, is confined to the institute as a patient. He had become hopelessly enamored of an actress in a theatrical troupe in which he is engaged. She has married its artistic director and leading player. Despite the friendliness of both his rival and his actress wife, Kerzhentsev cannot overcome his wild jealousy. He dreams or imagines a murder but does not commit one.

He has summoned the institute's head professor to prove himself sane in the hope that he may free himself from further detention. To do this he will, by way of psychiatric experiment, enact scenes from *Hamlet* with the collaboration of some of his friends and fellow actors who have been rehearsing the play. The elaborate charade is performed and at the play's close we, along with the professor, realize that Kerzhentsev is indeed, or has become, mad.

It is clear that the author has borrowed the Pirandellian pharmacopoeia of *Henri IV*. The dose that he has imbibed has acted on him like a cathartic. The result is windy, pretentious and dull. Nothing comes to life.

A cast of capable actors struggles valiantly under Herbert Berghof's professionally devout direction to little avail. The straw for their bricks is inferior. Laurence Luckinbill as Kerzhentsev is required to rant and rave endlessly, a task he assiduously accomplishes. Maria Schell as the actress beloved by the hapless Kerzhentsev is a beautiful woman (though I had the impression that she was insufficiently lit; sitting just past the center of the orchestra floor I had trouble seeing her features distinctly) and she *can* act. Her voice seemed a bit faint for a large auditorium, which may have been due to opening-night nerves if not to characterization. Larry Gates, in the small role of the Professor, carries conviction. Stage sophism is not thought; strenuous sincerity is not inspiration. □

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A JOB?

The Nation offers a special service to unemployed professionals—You may place a position-wanted ad in our Classified ad section for $3.50 (three lines. Each additional line is $1.50. It is suggested that such ads be run in three consecutive issues for optimum results).

WRITERS • EDITORS • PUBLICISTS • POLITICAL WORKERS • EDUCATORS • PROFESSIONALS IN THE ARTS

Yes there is a hitch—If you get a job through your ad, we'd like you to take a subscription to The Nation for yourself or for a friend.

classified

$1.50 per line / 2 line minimum/ 6 words (45 characters or spaces) per line/ Payment in advance must accompany all orders for less than three consecutive insertions. Classified Display: $20 per inch/ one inch minimum. Send to The Nation, 333 Sixth Ave., N.Y.C. 10014.

WEEKENDS

FRIENDLY, INFORMAL—Willowbrook Inn, Warwick, N.Y. On Appalachian Trail, woodlands hiking trails. Near Vernon Valley & Great Gorge ski center. Homecooking. Tel: (201) 853-7728.

PERSONALS

INTELLIGENT WOMAN, 50's, minor physical handicap, wishes to contact other Handicappeds. Possible forming of intercity club. Free Membership. Write: Ms. Lorentzen, P.O. Box 933, Philadelphia, Penna. 19105.

SINGLE BOOKLOVERS gets the cultured, single, widowed or divorced acquainted. Nationwide. Write Box AE Swarthmore, Pa. 19081.

MISCELLANEOUS

STORE OWNERS: Want to sell The Nation? There's a special reward. Write for details: Ad Dept., The Nation, 333 Sixth Ave., NY NY 10014.

HELP A STRUGGLING artist and enjoy an original. Beautiful bookmarks $1.50 each. 4 for $5.00. Box 1673 P.G. Plaza, Md. 20788.

Buy it or sell it through
The Nation *Classifieds.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

POSITIONS WANTED

URBAN AFFAIRS: program planning & evaluation, social research & analysis. Good writing, oral skills. 8 yrs. college teaching, sociology. Resume: 318B Greenwich St., NYC 10013.

FORMER NATION employee, exp. magazine & newspaper reporter, public relations, filmstrip writer/producer seeks full time, part time, or free lance employment in NYC or Westchester area. Write: H.K. % Nation, Adv. Dept.

PUBLICATIONS

Uncommon Lawyers Workshop
announces publication of:
DeFunis v. Odegaard: Race, Merit, and the Fourteenth Amendment
Paper, 228 pp., glossary, notes, index; set by Underwood typewriter, perfect bound. LC No. 75-41549.
Available free in single copies to public law libraries and independent scholars and educators with a concern for the preferential admissions controversy.
Uncommon Lawyers Workshop
P. O. Box 160636
Sacramento, California 95816

BETTER THAN medicine. Factual paperback "Fasting Can Save Your Life." $1.75. 325,000 copies printed. Hygiene (B), Box 636, Valley Center, Cal. 92082.

STUDY of our permanent inflation. Send $5.00 in postal money order to P.O. Box 78 Yucaipa, Cal. 92399.

PSY PROBLEMS? Depression, Schizophrenia, Alcoholism, Sex, Drugs? Send $3 for A Layman's Guide to Vitamin Psychiatry. E. Wysong, 2850 E. Southway Blvd., Kokomo, Ind. 46901.

EVERYDAY SPELLER & Word Use Guide. Use this college text to write with precision. Only $2.95, with money-back guarantee. G. Simmons, 3279 Via Bartolo, San Diego, Cal. 92111.

PRESIDENTIAL AND V.P. debates on cassettes. All four $10.00, any one $2.75. AUDAK/200 N. Taylor, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122.

'TECHNOCRACY—Technological Social Design' available for one dollar from Technocracy, Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, Ohio 44874.

READ THE GUARDIAN—newsweekly gives MARXIST viewpoint on national and international news. Special 8-week trial subscription, $1.00. GUARDIAN, Dept. N, 33 West 17th Street, New York City 10011. (Full year $12.50.)

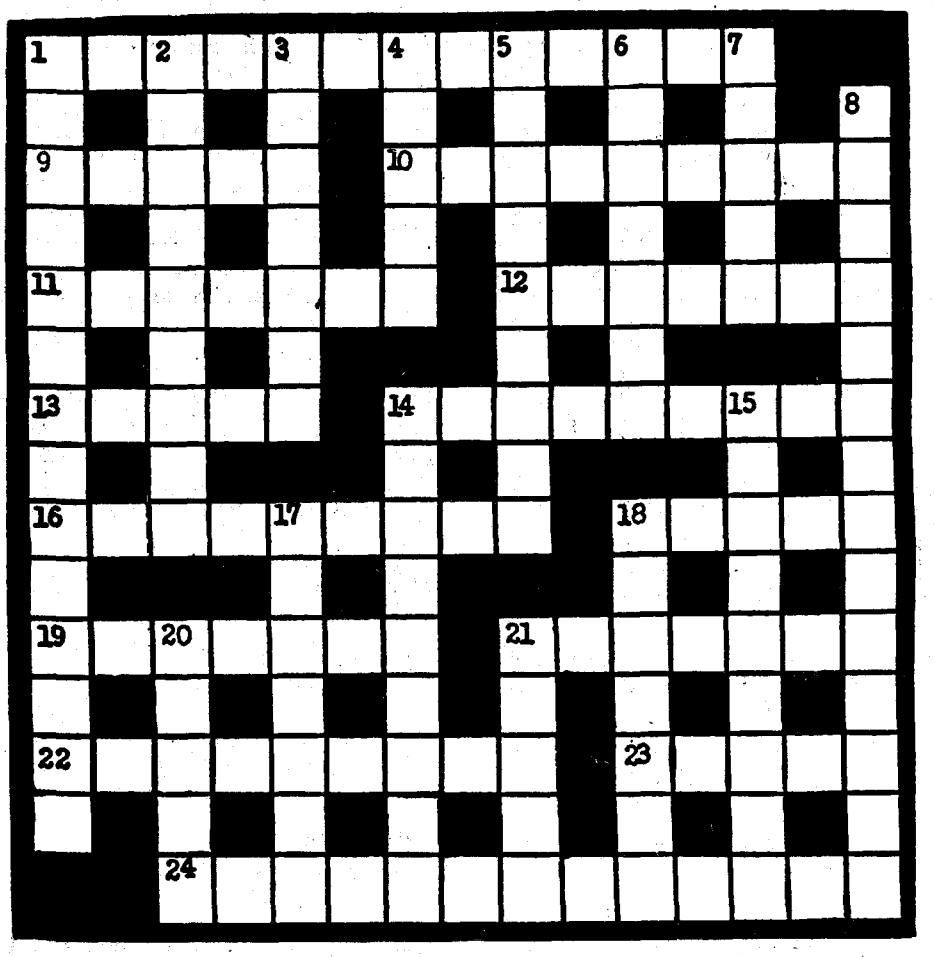
SAN FRANCISCO REVIEW of Books, "James Kavanaugh on Catholic Bishops," Nov. issue. Single copy 75¢, subscription $7.50. 2140 Vallejo, San Francisco, Cal. 94123.

SPANISH

LEARN SPANISH. If you really want to learn Spanish quickly, fluently and correctly, and if you have the courage and stamina for intensive and disciplined study, come for at least one month to Cuernavaca Language School of CIDOC. First month $300. Following four weeks $200. Private tutor available at $350 for 50 hours. Details: Apdo. 480. Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Crossword Puzzle No. 1654

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Thick and thin sometimes does, at the end of a swing. (6-7)
9 The sort of accent some Belles seem to strive for, especially common in France. (5)
10 Odin, out of sorts, goes to 23 or some other place. (9)
11 Not necessarily the Ancient Mariner, though one should be experienced. (3,4)
12 In time, making things uniform? (7)
13 It's obvious 3 has no current basis. (5)
14 Cannot get confused by something in geometry, obviously. (9)
16 Certainly not a place that's hard to sit on. (4,5)
18 The sort of 23 that might hold one captive. (5)
19 They might be responsible for your getting sick in a taxi on the way back. (7)
21 Like Spartacus, or more like one further east in Europe? (7)
22 Reach a majority this way. (4,2,3)
23 Possibly service in a foreign country. (5)
24 Switch to put things so? (Possibly 1 down with the proper count.) (3,4,1,5)

DOWN

1 With 50 less, it would imply putting padding behind you, but just when one is sick. (4,2,4,4)
2 The French take-off should be cleaner, in a way. (9)
3 Ham does, when difficult to carve. (7)
4 Ordinal hit badly, by the way, if short. (5)
5 What a day for the Moscow landlord! (3,6)
6 Lepers used to make to cry so. (7)
7 Leaving the capital of Tahiti, arrange to see part of another island. (5)
8 Some trapeze artists hope to be, but it's no crime if they are. (6,2,3,3)
14 The uneasy part of 16 is broken, with various beginnings for an unorthodox serenade. (9)
15 In such matters as sex, Amin in general should be making an inquiry. (9)
17 Perhaps complain about what the baseball umpire sometimes does? (4,3)
18 Finding one in church is a matter of luck to a number of Romans. (7)
20 Arrived at nothing like a minor work of art. (5)
21 If you 3, you might make one in the worst way. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 1653

ACROSS: 1 and 6 Calculated risk; 10 Mugging; 11 Pelisse; 12 Tote. 13 Bloody Mary; 15 Terrain; 16 Tableau; 17 Impeach; 20 Palaces; 22 Kith and kin; 23 Mimi; 25 Frontal; 26 Cabinet; 27 and 28 Take possession. DOWN: 1 Come to think of it; 2 Lighter; 3 Unit; 4 Angolan; 5 Exploit; 7 In state; 8 Keep your shirt on; 9 Plays ball; 14 Cataracts; 18 Pothook; 19 Hidalgo; 20 Princes; 21 Chianti; 24 Ebbs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If You've Been Reading

THE NATION

Every Week

For The

Past 111 Years

Then, starting back in 1865, right to the present era of Corporation-dominated America, you have not only kept fully abreast of political and social events . . . but you have also had a refreshing, independent, and venturesome perspective of the undercurrents—the dynamics—of events. Also, you've been getting a straightforward analysis and review of literature, music, poetry, theatre, TV, films, art and dance.

You have been reading comment by such of our contributors as William Butler Yeats, Ralph Nader, Henry James, Elizabeth Holtzman, Leon Trotsky, Carey McWilliams, John Dos Passos, Corliss Lamont, Andre Malraux, George McGovern, Thomas Mann, Emile Capouya, Robert Frost, Robert Sherrill, Emily Dickinson, and a sparkling lot of other writers and thinkers.

The Nation, America's oldest weekly, has been ahead of the news ever since its first issue in 1865

If You Haven't Been Reading The NATION For The Past 111 Years

Get with it — Subscribe today!

Please enter a subscription to **The Nation** as checked below for
☐ 1 year (47 issues) $21.00 ☐ 2 years (94 issues) $37.00

Name (please print) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send a gift subscription to
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

When Subscribing You May Send One Or More Gift Subscriptions For Just $18.00 Each

THE NATION
333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N Y 10014

Add $1.00 per year for Canada and Mexico; add $2.00 per year for all other foreign subscriptions.

11-13-76

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED